



EVSTATHIA

or the

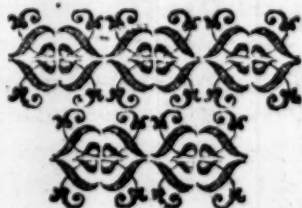
CONSTANCIE OF SVSANNA
CONTAINING THE PRESER-
vation of the Godly, subversion of the wic-
ked, precepts for the aged, instructi-
ons for youth, pleasure
with profite.

R.

Penned by R. R. G.

Dominus mea rupes.

B.



Printed at Oxford by Joseph Barnes, and are to
be solde in Paules church-yarde at the
signe of the Bible. 1599.

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TO THE RIGHT VERTVOVS AND
 modest Gentlewoman Mistris M. B. wife to the
 Right worshipfull D. B. Esquier R. R. wi-
 sheth the eternizing of her vertues, by
 the daily practise of her christi-
 an life.

* *
 *



Although (right worshipfull) my longer
 silence mighte iustly indite me either of
 ingratitude, or forgetfulnes, in Senecaes
 censure the greater of the twoye, I not great
 in fortunes grace, younge in
 yeares and not ripe in experience, vvas
 fully resolu'd to traueser the indistinct,
 untill more store of wealth, graver age,
 & greater practise, might warrant me
 to performe that indeed which now I can but promise in conceipt.
 And in that resolution, considering the vndigested method was fit
 meate for soule-mouthea Momus, and the Rhetoricall dogge, I
 determined to make an bersticke of this illiterate pāblet, & com-
 mit it to the fire; but yet respecting the goodnesse of the argument,
 the greatnes of your vertues, and many thank-worthy benefites
 bestowed both by your selfe, and your right worshipfull husbāde I
 fell from this faint determination to a second and more sound reso-
 lution, Phaeton-like to carry Atlas his burden, and rather to ha-
 zarde a faulte in manners then incurre a blemish in nature, ra-
 ther (by beeing to bolde) to make you the patrones of so simple a
 worke, then by silence to seeme vnthankfull. And albeit in per-
 forming heereof I shall rather wronge my selfe in bewraying mine
 owne weakenesse, then righte your worshippe in yeelding a fit worke
 answerable to your vworth; yet my heartes hope is, that as

the christall stone illustrated by the glorious beames doth render
some (though meane) reflex of the suns immensitie: so my selfe (ex-
posed to your benefites) may heereby make some (though small) re-
turne of your undeserved bounty. And although the treatise
seeme harsh and may dislike you because it came not from Perna-
lus mountaine; yet I doubt not but you will nourish it for the hill
Syons sake (a speciall object of your godly minde) from whence by
induction it is derived. The method I confesse is the more absurde
by reason it was ordered without advice since my coming into the
country where as the Persians used to whittle little stickes to keep
themselves from idlenesse; so my selfe to banish sloath, have at idle
hewers busied my head and hand, to whistle out this simple exer-
cise: nothing doubting but that time will one day furnish mee with
opportunitie and practise with sufficiencie to pen a more perfect vo-
lume wortier your vertuous view. And hoping in the meane time
that you (Penelope-like in the absence of your Vlysses) will allow
of this, vouchsafe the reading, and accept in kindenes what I offer
in duty, I leaue your worshipspe to the ancient of daies, to prolonge
your life in all happines.

Your worships vnworthy, yet worthely
bounden, ROBERT ROCHE.





To the Reader.

SVS ANNA heere, walkes forth the way to glory;
To shew her constancie and spoilelesse fame,
If any fault, escape her faultlesse story,
The fault is mine; on me bestow the blame.
Which would her teach, before I could attaine,
Well tuned verse, or moralizing vaine.

Were shee or no; were Ioachim her goodman;
Had Iewes inditall law, and Sanhedrin,
To iudge of life, in stately Babilon;
Were Daniell hence, first knowne a Sambethin.
Were hee a childe, when hee so well presaged;
Or termed so, compared to these aged.

Were these two segnors heere, (base slaues to sin)
Achab and Tzidkija, in Ieremie.
Fell this before, or when full thrall was in;
Or Cyrus reigne as some doe veresie.
Did all things passe, as they haue past the pen:
Or poeme-like to better liues of men.

These things I leane, to iudgement of the wise,
(Gray headed Senate of our grane diuines,)
If I should iudge, I should but preindize,
And with erronious letters, fill my lines.
Is me contentes, that well I may avow,
The stories subject, such as most allow.

To the Reader.

*Expect not heere, th' invention, or the vaine;
Of Lucrece rape-write: or the curious scan,
Of Phillis friend; or famous fairy-Swaine;
Or Delias prophet, or admir'd man.*

*My chicken fethered winges, no ympes enrich,
Pens not full sum'd, mount not so high a pitch.*

*Let Colin reare his flight to admiration,
And traine his lonely flocke, his pipe to follow.
Let Damons reach, out-reach all imitation;
And frame melodious hymnes, to please Apollo.
The swaine that pend this pastorall for Pan;
Thought once to end his worke, ere began.*

*For while I ment, to streigne these sorie noates,
Past Diapent, vnto a Diapason;
There fell a chauce within our seely coates,
Both great and suddaine; able to amaze one.
When mourning Mopsus cride, leane of thy play,
Sbift noates a fide, flinge pipe and all away.*

*Cease seely man; pull downe thy wonted pride,
Enioine thy muse to mourne, and pen to moane.
(As did Amintas, when good Phillis dide)
For thou art quite forlorne, and left alone.
Sith Thestylis, (thy Thestylis) hath left thee.
While death of greatest iewel, hath bereft thee.*

*For Thestylis was shee, which ioi'd thy springing;
Who eake allow'd thee breath, to blow thy pipe,
And idle time to whistle and be singing,
And brea'thee vp, till thou were waxen ripe.
Tb' Elixir of thy life, in loue was shee;
Whose coine did quintessence, thy muse and thee.*

To the Reader.

Whose knight-ri'd birth, gane blazon to thy blond,
Whose godly end, doth endlesse heere abide.
Yet wanting her, thou wantest all thy good,
As doe more flockes; the dawme, and lambes beside,
Whom ioyfull Thomas hath good will to vse,
From fruisfull lawnes, vnto a shorter lease.

This vncouth newes, did so my sences lame;
That though sweete Cynthius, sold me by the eare
My musicke after went in worser frame,
And as my musicke was, such was my cheere,
My looke vnlasty; countenance abated,
Minde make content; muse weake and overwatched.

Yet did I singe my sorrowes to an ende,
(An ende betakes, the longest sided day.)
And to a vertuous patroneſſe commende,
My homely verse, and rusticke roundelay.
Whose godly zeale, equivalent with Hanna;
Will not disdaine, to commendance Susanna.

R.

R.

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Coricaeus to the Author.

I seated late, in leasures lappe;
Had leasure to peruse,
Thy Firstling, term'd thy *Susans constancie*
And at the swelling titles
Promise, long did muse.
Which how perform'd, let others iudge (not I)
Who spent my thoughtes, to be thy warning spie;
That iudgement darst provoke, by bolde attempt,
When time from tongues, no writer doth exempt.

While deepe conceited critique wittes,
Of this our daintie time,
Doe like no birdes, but what themselues haue hatched
They loue no pleasant prose,
Are discontent with rime.
But what they please, all *Poems* else age patched,
Which humors still, with discontent are matched,
And wayward discontent, the censors bowe;
To quippe they care not whome, they care not how.

Sometimes whole heapes of idle wordes,
(They quarle) are cast away.
Sometimes the matter naked, wanteth wordes.
Sometimes good matters mar'd,
When ill contriv'd, (they say)
Sometimes the sence, a cuffling cause affordes.
Sometimes a sentence, or affectate wordes,
A tedious stirre: for in *Philantus* brawle,
There scapes not one; hee hath a bout withall.

Saith

Coricams to the Author.

Saith one of these; the note is iust,
Mongst men of better note:
Our sharpest wittes, that climbe the sceane of fame,
In vaineft follies leese
Themselues, and vainely dote.
Doe spend much art, for to deserue much blame,
While they some idle-dreamed phancie frame,
And leaue their workes, a witnessse firme and stable,
VVhat time they lost in hatching of a fable.

Great pittie sure that learned men,
Of great and rare conceate,
Should so these braue habilities debase:
That while they stretch them out
To prooffe, to shew them great;
The praise of their imploimentes in this case,
Is voide of praise; and hath this onelie grace,
That they haue wisely tolde, a foolish tale,
And smoothly set a long made lie to sale.

And yet this inconvenience great
Might finde some faire excuse,
If drift of their discourse, at vertue aymed,
For oft in fables foldes
Trimme morall truth doth vse.
But when the worke is matter meereley feigned,
And ende thereof, deserues to be disdeigned.
The writer merites pitie, more then praise,
And worke (vnworthy presse) fit flames to raise.

Thus surelie speakes, this *Censurer*,
And doth his thoughtes reveale,

Coricams to the Author.

(As if some sterne Dictator, thundred lawes;
From whom on paine of death,
Vnlawfull to appeale.)

Yet did not well bethinke him in his pawse?
For though a story true, doth grace his cause:
He paintes it out with colours of invention:
And giues it wordes, to fit his owne intention,

Which if the Cenlor vse him selfe,
Thy selfe maist vse the same.
Whose leuill aymes at as vertuous end;
And to reduce the worke,
And story into frame;
By reasons rule, the whole discourse is pend,
And hath no cause, the godly to offend,
Or grieue the good: vnlesse some harsh diuine,
Against his sacred *Poems* will repine.

An other sort of snarling mates,
Do pester ev'ry age:
Who will be critickes, though they guide the cart.
And censure workes of weight;
Quoat faultes in every page.
Depraue the wittes, of men of best desert:
And iudge of all, by envie (not by arte.)
Who more doth mallice art, then artlesse braine?
Who byteth worse then *Beuins* in his vaine?

High spirited *Homer* (matchlesse man)
A baggage, deem'd a blocke:
And did with bitter tauntes, his workes deface,
Of *Vergilles* daintie vaine,

Corleam to the Author.

Could *Mevius* frame a mocke,
Inferring that he filch'd his chiefest grace,
By treading in the tract, of *Homers* trace,
Or from the fruites, of *Hesiods* happie braine,
And *Theocrise* the *Syracusan* swaine.

Thus to obscure the merriest crie,
Where deepe-mouth'd hounds doe go;
Each time hath bawling curre, that barke and howle:
Which sith tis so, hath bin,
And ever will be so:
Of learned rest secure, well train'd in schoole,
Thou must not feare, the flout of every foole.
Who in a prating vaine (though thou repine)
Will blame whole bookes, but cannot mend a line.

C. A. R.



An induction to the story.

WHat time the iudge severe, (sin-scourdging God)
(Cōpeld to change the course that mercy ment),
Withdrew his favour, and drew forth his rod,
To punish those that knew not to repent:
That time ingrate-full *Iuda*, iudgement had:
To die or suffer bondage (even as bad.)

For when they scornd, the heav'nly herauldes sent,
To summon them (back-sliders) to the Lord:
Crying with yernefull voice, Amend, repent,
Else hoattest wrath, will follow this his word.
Else will too late repentance plead for grace;
When mercie flies, and iustice holdes the place.

When hardned heartes, could not become low wise,
By others harmes, to learne their owne beware:
While fresh record presented to their eies,
Ten brethren tribes, subdude to slavish care;
Whom the *Assirian* monarch, did subdue;
And made of freemen borne, a captiue crue.

When eke they were vnmindefull how their king,
Younge *Ieconias*, but nine yeares before;
And thousandes moe: the sanctus blacke did sing.
(What time they did their dismall day deplore)
While captiues thence in bondage led to dwell,
They crying, weeping schreeching, say farewell.

When princes, rulers, priestes and people base,
Exceeded farre, all heathen in their sin.
When *Sodom* and *Samaria* might giue place,
And not come neere, the waies they walked in.
When harmelesse men, were held of none account,
But he the man that did in sinne surmount,

Then

An induction to the story.

Then as a raging flowd, long bent with baies,
Beares headlong downe, what standes before the breach:
Or as rebellious soares, by long delaies,
Recure-lesse scorne, the cunning of the leach;
Ev'n so: remedlesse, like raging thunder, (der.
The Lord powrd downe his wrath, long time kept vn-

When whistling for the Bees of *Babel*-land,
Came *Nabuchadnezzar* (sirnamd the great)
And brought with him a most puissant band,
Offouldiers; skild in every war-like feate.
For as the clustring bees, in swarmes doe cling;
So flockt the *Chaldeis*, round about their kinge.

Then *Salem* saw, a sad heart-breaking sight;
Resolved foes entrench'd about her walles,
In glittring armout, many a warlike wight,
Most fully bent (what ever hap befall'es)
By dint of sword, to winne eternall fame;
Or pawne their liues, in purchase of the same.

But most of all this grieve the conscience gaules;
And ever mates their mindes (so overtaken,
By deepe despaire) to thinke amidst these brawles,
That God for sin, their citie had forsaken.
A matchlesse woe; if God the cause withstand,
A fearefull conscience makes a feeble hand.

Adde more to this; the seige so long doth lie,
That famine in the citie is so soare,
The people pine, consume, doe droope and die;
While horses in the field; haue forrage store.
Death in the house, destruction in the streete;
Sword in the field, distresse and daunger meete

Amidst

An induction to the story.

Amidst these woes, the rumbling *Ecchoes* sound;
How dreadfull drums, strike vp the fierce allarme,
And ratling trumpe, (with bloudy noates rebound)
The valiant heartes, to fell assault doth charme.

When herauld first, had summond them to yeeld,
Or to expect, a mercy-wanting field.

Then for supplie, of thundring cannon shot,
Go ram and engine, to the walles (a pace.)

The Pioner he, bestirres him in his plot,
To make huge towers, to giue the souldier place.

On either part, their powers they fully bend,
To giue assault, and from the walles defend.

Ensignes aduaunce, and glory scales the fort,
The ladders then are hoysed to the walles,
And honors hope, th' assaylantes doth exhort,
To climb from whence, an other headlong fall.

While Archers shoote, from tough wel-tembred bow,
Their thirled singing shaftes, as thicke as snow.

When once the eager souldier, hath made way,
Within the walles; and might command the towne,
Then as a hungry Lyon for his pray;
He rangeth, rageth, killeth, knocketh downe.

Then might be seene, (like streames to make a flood)
The streetes and channels, flow with crimson blood.

The bedlem handes, do deale soorth murthring blowes,
The victor rageth restlesse, (Lyon-like)
While mercie craving vanquish'd, pleades his woes,
To him that hath no eares, but handes to strike.

The maid, the wife, is subiect to this rage;
The suckling babe and he that stoopes for age.

An induction to the story.

For as the mower, with his keene edg'd sickle,
Cuts downe as well the greene, as seeded grasse;
Eve so the souldiers sword, (though teares downe trickle)
Permitteth not a breathing soule to passe,

He spareth none that happen in his way;
Faire wordes, chaste lookes, entreaties, beare no sway.

Then sounded forth, the screitching grieſly crie,
Of slaughtered soules; and many a deepe ſet groane,
Of ſuch as murthred, yeelde the gholt and die,
From wounded lungs, yeelding a hollow moane,
While manly men, that whilome ſtoutly ſtoode,
Diſmembred now, lie weltring in their blood.

Then might be heard, and ſeene with wofull eies
The living ſoules, lamenting for the dead;
Powring out plaintes, with ſobbes with ſighes and cries.
And bitter teares, as bleeding heartes might ſhed.
The old lament, long life to be forlorne,
The young repent, that ever they were borne.

The wiſe ſhee ſoundes (and yeeldes her vitall breath)
To ſee her husband die (in wofull caſe)
The husband feeles a fit, far worſe then death,
To ſee his wife defild, before his face.
And ſeely babes, (poore heartes) to periſh this,
That never did offence, or thought amiſſe.

The mourning mothers, rugge, and hale their heares,
To ſee their ſlaughtered ſeede, remedileſſe.
The children baſh their cheekes, with bloudy teares,
To ſee their wretched parentes, in diſtreſſe.
While help-leſſe handes, doe truſt vnto their feete;
And leave poore infants, crawling in the ſtreets.

An induction to the story.

For now the men of armes, were fled by stealth;
And every soule was left, to shift for one.
Counsaile did want; regard was none of wealth,
Of kin, or friend, or who were left alone.

Who makes not hast, death and destruction fees,
The happrest wight, doth shew the swiftest heeles.

When souldiers slaughtring sword, embrewd with blood,
Found not a man, that durst resistance make:

Then bedlem minde, gan grow to milder moode,
(If mildnesse be as bad a course to take)

For now vnbridled lust, at large doth stray;
And prowles about, for pillage, and for pray.

Had chaste *Lucrecia*, dwelt amongst those dames,
Full many a *Tarquin*, would haue wrought his will.

Had good *Susanna*, wandred in those flames,
Her spot-lesse corpes, had bin constrain'd to ill.

While seely lambes, the chastest, and most iust,
Became a pray vnto a peysantes lust.

The matchlesse vessels, of magnificence,
The temples treasure, (many a millions mate)

The wealth, of *Zedechias* excellence,

The riches of his Lordes, and men of state:

These things were sent away to *Babylon*;

As fit for *Nabuchadnezzar* alone.

What else was left, of Iewels, gold, and plate,
Amongst the meaner sort, (which might be much)

Each souldier held, what so thereof he gat;

While they with other spoiles, themselues enrich.

And when the pilfring hand, had his desire;

The rest was lett, to be consum'd with fire.

Then

An induction to the story.

Then climes the furious flame, the stately tower;
Each priueledge, dorth giue the souldier place.
The pioner spares, nor temple, house, nor bower,
The time is spent, to spoile and to deface.

There was not left one monument of fame,
Which did not feele the force of burning flame.

The Heav'n-like house, the temple of the Lord;
The worldes eie, and onely worke of name,
Whom once he did delight, but now abhord)
Is rayed downe, and robbed of that fame.

The walles also, that hem the citie round,
By might of men, are eu'ned to the ground.

The feely captiues, that had scap'd the sword,
And were reserv'd as *Trophies*, of the spoile;
Hange downe their heades, and cannot speake a word,
Or sound adue vnto their natiue soile.

The seruantes loath, to see the masters face,
The subiectes grieue, to weigh the princes case.

Whom haplesse king, flight could not yeeld reliefe,
But as the deere, before the nimble dogge,
He was enforst, to stoope vnto his grieue;
And for a crowne, to were a heauie clogge.

What time his sonnes, once slaine before his face,
He had his eies put out, with great disgrace.

And so blinde captiue, led to *Babylon*,
To be a bondman to his dying day?
He left the royall seate, of *Salomon*,
And now must leaue commaunding, and obey.

Since he that was impyring prince before,
Is now a fellow prisoner, and no more.

An introduction to the story.

Amongst these fettred troopes, of thrall'd states,
You must suppose transported with the rest,
Helchia, Ioachim, and those tragicke mates,
VWhose natures, not their names are heere exprest:
Were *Susan* borne, or no, (their glories shine)
Vnknowne, it wantes a *Delius* to divine.

But *Daniell* then, past twenty yeares of age,
In *Babilon* was growne to great regard.
Of fame in court; the mighty monarches page,
Dreame secreat *Sezar*, and renowned *Bard*,
VWhich knowne; I leaue both story and my skilt,
Vnto your courteous censure, and goodwill.

EVSTA.



EVSTATHIA

or the

CONSTANCIE OF SVSANNA CONTAINING THE PRESER-

vation of the Godly, subversion of the wicked,
precepts for the aged, instructions for youth, pleasure
with profite.

WHen *Chaldean* glory, fate in whinged throane,
Of flying *Fame*; (which far and neere doth wader)
In *Asian* soile, in statelie *Babylon*,
The worldes monarch, and the earthes commander;
VVhat time no humane forces, might vvithstand her.
Then did stout *Syria* stoope, and *Egypt* bowv,
And *Iuda* bend, before her frowning brow.

Then princely peeres did ducke, and doe her ducty;
Then raisd ihce in the aire, sky-kissing towers;
Then did the circled earth, admire her beauty;
Then dwelt there in her braue, and matchlesse bowers;
The hight and sovereigntie, of worldlie powers.
VVhose seife-ruld hands, did sway the scepter royall,
That kingdomes kept in awe, and subiectes loyall,

Standing this tipe, offading maiestie,
There dwelt vvithin, this state-commanding towne,
A *Iew*; (a man of passing modestie)
Helchia hight; and he of good renowne,
Right worthy (for his wit) to weare a crowne.
VVho tooke to vvife, a faire and louely dame;
VVhose godly life, gaue glory to his fame,

The constancie of Susanna.

or as the ringe (compact by curious art)
of it selfe, right seemely to the eie;
but when the *Saphire*, is his true conserte,
there doth appeare, a fuller maiesty:
Her vertue so, his fame doth beautifie.
Her husband was esteem'd, among the states;
And decked with her glory, in the gates.

From which chaste roote, in time did spring a rose,
Susanna cleapt; not borne to eate her foode,
or make dandling, that must feele no blowes.
Her parentes care, was how to teach her good,
and to invest her minde with modest mood:
Their reason, fond affection had exile;
Not bent to make an idoll, of their childe,

Sometimes the godly mother (matron-like,)
With rod in hand, to keepe her babe in awe;
With settled looke, and grace demure and meeke,
Would teach her childe, the precepts of the law;
and make her imitate, what so shee saw,
In comely iecture, seemely gate, and guise,
That use might manners make and doctrine wise.

And as sweete *April* showers, make *Flora* flourish;
so her kinde father (carefull for his ioy)
With choice preceptes, doth vertue feed, and nourish:
That grace might freely grow, without annoy,
And natures weedes, keepe vnder and destroy.
Whereby it came to passe; at bed, and bord,
There past no ill-spent time, or idle word.

The constancie of Susanna.

And carefull man, he led by meere remorse,
VWhen booke had rest, and needle leaue to play;
Doth entertaine her thoughtes, with some discourse,
From *Adams* age; vntill that present day,
And oft recountes, *Ierusalem* decay.

Whilst eke by cunning art, *chorographie*,
He doth present, the citie to her eie.

These lines (saith he) describe it triplewald,
Aleph, the plot, where stood the temple great.
Beth, *Sion* castle, (*Dauids* citie cald)
Guimell, the *Senate* house, and iudgement seate,
Daleth the market place. *He Mathkad* streate.

And so by letters, of her *Alphabet*,
He pointeth out, where every place was set,

And streete by streete, recounteth till he came,
To say heere stood my, there he (speechlesse then)
Could not pronounce (*my house*) teares stopt the same,
Whilst from his hand, he flings he pointing pen,
And falling from his matter, vnto men;
He curseth both the auctors, and the sin,
The breeders of the bondage, he is in.

For while (*sweete Susse*) saith he we feard the Lord,
And did his lawes, and sacred hestes obey;
So long he was our shield, our speare, our sword,
Our castle, fort, and bulwarke day by day,
Philistin, *Ammon*, *Egypt*, beare no sway.
Not *Assur*, nor fell *Syrian* with his bandes,
Or sun-burnt *Ethiop*, could subdue our landes.

The constancie of Susanna,

But vvhhen our rulers all, vvhere out of rule;
VVhen prince, and priestes, and people, everychone,
VVere irreligious (like the lust-led *Mule*)
Pleased in sin, and vile pollution;
Then kindled vvrrath; then vvas our vvoc begon.
Then did he giue vs over, for a pray;
In *Chaldean* noates to *sol, fa*, weale avway.

Yet though he hath vs bruz'd, vve are not broken,
Or left as out-castes in the eies of men;
Sith by his spirit-taught prophets, he hath spoken,
That at the end, of threescore yeares and ten,
Our seed shall sit, in *Sion* gates age'n.
Thy selfe but young maist liue to see the day;
Our stooping age, hath hopelesse natures nay.

Meane time, liue mindefull of thy latter end,
Thou maist die young: once old canst not liue long,
Content thy selfe in state that God doth send,
In sweetest ioies expect some loouer among,
The vvorldes sweete smiles, are as the *Sirens* song.
And humane pomp, is as a vvhirling blast;
Soone gone, and faunce recall, vvhhen once tis past.

Yea man himselfe, is as a raine-bred bubble;
VVhose shape though it be like, t' *Hemisphere* sky;
Yet if a vvindy blast, the vvater trouble,
It doth revert, to vvater by and by,
And leaues alone, the vaine-beholding eie.
Such is *Susanna* deere, thy present state,
A shade, a dreame, a vvriting vvanting date.

The constancie of Susanna.

Learn then sweete soule, to loath things pleasing vaine,
Learn then to loue, thy soules long lasting health,
Learn then to know thy God, and him to gaine.
VVhich vvell thou maist, if first thou know thy selfe,
(VVhich is indeede, more peere-lesse far then pelfe)
Seeme lesse to none, then to thine ovvne concept,
Selfe-loue (a servile foe) on fooles doth vvaite.

Embrace Gods promises, hold fast thy hope,
Measure thy life, by line of sacred law,
Containe thine actions all, vvithin this scope,
Be not secure: but standing stand in avve,
Least thine affections, thy zeale vvith-drawv.
And still (sweete loving lamb) in age and youth,
VVith stedfast constancie, professe the truth.

Yeeld vs thy parentes, ay a lovvly heart,
In guerdon of the loue vve beare to thee,
Offend not friendes, let betters haue their part,
Be carefull of thy name, as of thine eie,
Let loue of fame, prevent all infamie.
Ill company avoide (as from the divell)
If thou vvilt free thy life, and actes from evill.

Remember (vvench) thou readest in thy booke,
Tvv things; the ornamentes of mayden head:
To haue a shamefast eie, and sober looke.
And other tvvo (if that thou hap to vvied)
Good name, and chastitie, to bring to bed.
Assure thy selfe, the owner of these fower,
Is godly faire, and hath a vvorthy dowver,

The constancie of Susanna.

Delight not (childe) in braue and rich aray;
To prune thy selfe, as if thou were imprented.
Bescemely, not a slut: be graue, not gay,
With cleanly comelineesse, be still contented.
Be not fond sicke, with fashions new invented.
For, tis but superfluitie of pride,
To haue a fashon-coyner, for thy guide.

Excessiue neatnesse, is a badge of euill,
An antsigne, of a light vnstable head,
An angling hooke, and engine for the diuell,
To catch such fooles, as are by fancie lead,
A moath that fretteth, till thy wealth be dead.
VVhile backe dosh make, the belly to be sterved;
VVhich matrons eie should see to be preserved.

Then is shee cald, a hufwife, (comely dame)
(Whilst cleanly fine, is voide of curious partes) .
Then which in time, was not a better name.
VVhen golden world, did want prides painting artes,
VVhen plaine content, possest the country heartes:
VVhen hospitalitie did feele no lacke,
And was not climbde, from table to the backe.

If that thy neighbours doe possesse good name,
Doe thou not envie, at their worldly blisse.
Nor be thou light, to credite every fame,
Reportes doe often hit, and often misse,
Of all thinges iudge the best, for best it is.
VVith sober looke be courteous vnto all,
VVith few familiar be, or none at all,

The constancie of Susanna.

Hide not a wanton heart, with modest eie,
Say not thy Psalter, in the diuilles booke.
Take heede beware of such hypocrisie,
(He is no saint, that saintishnesse forsooke).
Be more severe in life, then in thy looke.
And when thine eares haue heard what other say;
Allow thy tongue a bridle and a stay.

Learne good things, with good vwill; instruct the weake,
Comfort the comfortlesse, in their distresse,
Stop not thine eare, when pining poore doth speake,
Hate with thine heart, sin-breeding idlenesse,
Let thrifty minde, be free from all excesse,
Crave not too much; if riches once arise,
Obserue a meane, and let inough suffice.

And if thou covet, honest exercise,
Then read good bookes, such as our *Rabbies* pen,
Or vse such dames, as well can matronise,
With honest mirth, amongst the godly men,
With due regard, of seemely where and when.
And to conclude; where so thou hap to dwell;
Loue thou thine house, as snail doth loue the shell.

Thus did *Helchia*, (painefull father) teach,
His *Susan* deere; sweete obiekt of his eie;
Her mother daily, ceased not to preach,
The like preceptes, of grace, and modestie,
And oft would heere, how well shee would repleie.
What time her heart, reioiced for to see,
So witty answers, with like guile agree.

The constancie of Susanna.

While shape did hold, *Symmetrical* estate;
(Her manners mated vvith a gallant grace)
Her beauty, feature fine did emulate,
Vvith speech composed, and vvith sober pace.
And this decorum sitting in her face;
The whole and partes, resembled and were like
To perfect numbers, in *Arithmetike*,

And shee thus trained, from her tender yeares,
Became in time to reape her iust renowne:
In all respectes, so far surpass her peeres,
Of equall age, and vvealth within the towne,
That every vvay, her praises put them downe.
Whilst wantons bent, to play, and idle pleasure;
Shee train'd her thoughtes, to leeke eternall treasure.

Whereby it came to passe, that envie fell,
Pursuing vertue, with great eagernesse;
When they could not come neere, began to swell,
And with fine tauntes to make her praises lesse.
Some said, the mayd, would proue a prophetesse,
The booke-wise vvench, will yeeld a deepe divine,
Or of a saint, will hardly make a shrine,

But godly graue, that best doth iudge and say,
Did deeme her right, a worke of rare perfection:
A peerelesse peece, to be a princeesse pray,
One *Angel*-like; a vessell of election,
Whose shining fame was free from deathes infection,
Though her time-fading beavty, dead doth lie;
Which did surmount each feature scene with eie.

Why

The constancie of Susanna.

Why didst thou beauty fade? vvhy didst thou vvither?
O budding Rose, why didst thou ever blast?
Why didst thou proue vnconstant, as a feather,
In her whose constancie did stand so fast?
Sure, twas to teach vs nothing heere doth last.
For else thou wouldst haue liv'd, with *Susans* name;
And as a handmaide, waited on her fame.

Whose shape splendiferous vvvas, in each mans sight,
Whose looke gaue argument of sober grace,
Whose eies (two twinckling starres) nev'r proved light,
Whose silent tongue knew well, fit words to place,
Whose faith so firme, that nothing could deface.
Though two great seniors sought, to blot her brow;
And to their lure, to make her chaste soule bow.

O that such peerelesse splendor, should haue wrong;
And be entised, vnto lawlesse lust.
Not *Iuda*, but false *Iudasses* doe long,
Pure chastitie, to cast into the dust,
But leaving heere, those matters vndiscust.
You heard her life, first wained from the lappe, &
Now doth ensue, the processe of her happe.

When trust-lesse time, by his swift-footed pages,
(Cleap'd; minute, hower, day, weeke, the month & yeare)
Had brought her past, her two first sevens of ages,
And set her in th' ascendant, of her sphere;
And nature now gaue summons, to draw neere.
In nuptiall court, to yeeld expected homage,
Since that in bar, shee could not pleade her nonage.

Then

The constancie of Susanna.

Then scruple-finding, stickler vnto strife,
Propones her bashfull thoughtes, this bold discourse;
Twixt barren mayden-head, and bearing wife,
VVhich of these two did stand, in greatest force,
For with the best, shee ment to shape her course:
 Whilst in pure conscience court, where her soule fate,
 Her pleading thoughtes, it argue and debate,

Like *Hebrew* disputantes that had bin trained,
In *Moses* schoole; (at some *Gamaliels* feete)
And were not yet to christian lore reclaimed,
Sometimes they argue, mariage is most meete,
Sometimes (*è contra*) spider-sucke the sweete.
 VVhile sotted sences, are so *Jew*-beguiled,
 To deeme the mariage bed, a thing defiled.

At her heartes bar, these silent virgin pleaders,
VVith soaring high conceites, as highly rated;
Far fet their petegree, from stately leaders.
Pure *Angell* spirites; virgins (ere man) created,
VVhose actiue life, no *Angell* ever mated.
 While victory of virgins, doth excell,
 Which vanquish their owne flesh wherein they dwell.

Each other iarre not long suspended hanges;
An hower, a day, a yeare, doth stint the strife,
Blud-died martyrs, soone do passe their panges.
But this fell battle dureth, during life.
Heere daily striving; victory not rise.

 So matchlesse is, by antique rare discent,
 The mayden life, and glorious vanquishment.

The constancie of Susanna.

Yea auncient *Adam*, (*Iohvaes* protoplast)
Was moulded of his mother, mayden birth.
And old dame *Eva*, to cominend the chaste;
Of virgin rib, was fram'd a mayden birth.
Iust *Habell* liv'd, vn marryed heere on earth.
Melchisedech also (our *Rabbins* tell)
Did virgin, preist, and kinge in *Salem* dwell.

The wonder-working prophettes, most offame,
The *Thesbite*, and the *Abel-Mecholise*,
(The one transumpt to heav'n in fiery flame)
Do shew how god, doth virgin life delight.
Fore-seeinge *Esay*, where hee doth endire,
Messias birth, a maydens son doth make him,
And sure I am, his ayme doth not mistake him.

The thinge wee prayse, is mynion to this kinge.
The iustice, which the iustest iudge, approveth.
Vowd to the Lord, a secret, holy, thinge.
Sacred to God, as such a state beehoveth.
And for bycause, her contrary shee loveth.
Shee alwayes maryed lives, a spowfed wife,
Yet evermore a mayd, in single life,

Whose life is termd, the *Angels* imitation.
And therefore is hir figure, *Angel* faced.
Shee mowntes to heaven, by winges of contemplation,
And therefore is shee paynted, stately pased.
And for bycause, like Goddesse shee is graced.
Her traine is trod, with troopes of vertues highnesse,
Like maydes of honor, neere a princeesse highnesse.

VVhos

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhose robes (the spotlesse flesh integritie)
Do emulate, the white spot *Ermelin*,
A trophie of vice-quelling victorie,
The brannching palme, hir fingers claspeth in.
The wimple that shee weareth on hir chin.
An ant-signe is, of bathfull modestie.
Her humble minde, declares her stooping eie.

The *Gentiles* hence, in their high observations,
Compare chaste *Pallas*, Goddesse in their heaven,
To yeeld true maiden life due commendations)
Vnto the full, and misticke number seven)
Compacted of two numbers, od and eaven,
Th'entire and incorrupted vnitie)
VVith fix the secrete of virginie.

For what content, but in the maiden life.
VVhose fleet, wingd thoughts, ar free to serve the Lord.
VVhose mal-content, if not the married wife.
Careful to please grim fir, at bed and bord.
VVith best obedience, in hir deede and word.
And so mans service is then Goddes more geason.
Thus on the virgin part, her thoughtes do reason.

And to amase her weake, and pusill minde,
In creepe through crannies of imagination.
Deformd *Ideas* formes, and phansies blinde.
Sent forth by hir sicke fences, instigation.
Like staring greisly fendes, threatninge in vasion.
Presenting to her heart, the homely iarres.
And household cares, accurring nuptiall warres.

The constancie of Susanna.

Base mariage (say these bugges) is rife to all,
• Braue virgin life a perle posselt of few.
The seild found *Sagda* stoane, though it bee small.
Exceedes huge rockes that make more often shew.
VVhat recknings made, of recklesse drops of dew.
Rare things are in request, and do surmount,
VVhere common, base, and vile have none account.

Perhaps some worldling, will thee woo for wealth,
And talke of love, when heart by lust is galled,
Pleades his playn-dealing, steps not in by stealth.
Vowing thy vertue, hath his heart enthralled.
When as thy beautie, sitteth their enstalled,
VVhile mucke (not modestie!) hath him bewitched,
VVith honor kin, or friends, to bee enriched.

And so when causes, of his suite decay,
Lust fully gordgd, with lothsomnesse infected,
Fine beautie fled, false riches runne away,
The causes gon, for which thou were elected,
Th'effectes fal downe, and thou art then reiected,
VVhat better hope, or hap may bee maintained,
Of better rightes, why mariage was ordeined.

If that thou wed, to tame flesh kindled sin,
The fault is doubled, if thou fall away.
If to increase, and multiplie thy kin,
Thou shalt for loathed pleasure, deerly pay,
VVe but report, what married folkes do say.
Childe-getting vadinge ioy, is in their creedes;
A raging toy, that rash repentance breeds.

VVhen

The constancie of Susanna.

VWhen once the fruitfull wombe, hath seede conceived,
The altred woman, seemes not what shee vvas;
But growes vnweildy, groning and agrieved,
As one surchardged, with some weighty masse.
Like *Balams* bearing *Angel-frighted Asie*;
No sence, no signe, no pulse, no part, no passion,
But that it feelles some perfect alteration.

Some giddy vapour, doth infest her braines,
And with his foggy mistling dims her sight.
Inflates the secret Artires, and the vaines,
Dies dusky coloured, what before was bright,
Each seemely part, lesse seemely shewes in sight.
While heart (poore heart) forefeeling passions great,
With frightened panting pulse, doth thumpe and beate.

The pretie Ivory hilles (the maiden pappes)
Powt now with paine, to feele chaste flesh defiled.
The nibled teates, that perch vpon their toppes;
Yeeld mayden blush, to see themselues beguiled,
Their freedome fled, their liberties exiled,
Must now be tugging stockes, for tootlesse chaps,
And subiectes liue, to myriads of mishaps.

Chast loines by lawlesse lust; are martyred,
The brest doth feele, short breathing simpathies,
The bowels by defect, are tortured.
In weakned backe, do crickes and crampes arise,
What swellings feele the feete, the legges, the thighes?
While seemely wast (that all the members graced)
By strouting wombe, is stretched and defaced.

The constancie of Susanna.

Yea vvhether sound appetite, did hold his seate,
There sicke abhorfulnesse, hath built his bower.
Fond lust doth long, for sundry sortes of meate.
Sometimes it loathes the sweete, and likes the sower;
And oft vile things, with eagernesse devour.
Or else is subiect, to such qualmes and fits,
As doe deprive the sence, and dull the wits.

And thus the body, by a bodies breeding,
Becomes disordered, plethorique, oppressed,
Faintes in his faculties, erres in his feeding,
Fluds of defectes, beare downe poore health distressed,
Vvhich dangers with more danger are redressed.
Vvhile nature these, (and many mo presages) -
Appointed hath, birthes, hand attending pages.

And yet perhaps, conceived hath this wife,
No perfect birth, but some vnperfect thing.
A *Mole* (deformed lump that wanteth life)
Which direfull death, remedilesse doth bring,
Or during life, doth yeeld a deadly wring.
Again if womb, be subiect to abhorsion,
Best hope is bankrupt, by the same extortion.

Yea vvhether fine mettall, hath deformed mould,
Or makes a fault, in little or too much;
Or is not of the kindred, that it should,
Then nature in true working, keepes not tuch,
But frames the feely creature, to be such.
As vvas the mowld; the mettall, or the minde;
A *minotaur*, a mongrell out of kinde,

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhy should we name, the deadly panges and throwes,
Heart-pinching paines, companions of the birth?
The sowning fits, the weale-awayes and woes,
The broken sleepes, sad dreames depriving mirth,
The little ease, when once the infant stirth,
VVhom seeming'y, paine suffering mother feeles,
To teare her tender sides, with thumping heeles.

Let silence have, the nightly paines in nourlinge,
The cradles rockes, the wrayling brawling cries.
The dayly chardge, in buying, and disbursing,
To bringe it vp, and yeeld his want supplies.
The hastned age, the breedinge bodie buies,
VVith millions moe, of household cares and strife,
That do attend, the happiest maryed wife.

But if to cloake, their folly with devises,
They set the gaine of fruit, against this thorne,
They buy bad wares, at to excessive prices,
For if the climbinge weed, pull downe the corne,
The parentes wish such seed, had not bin borne.
And equall greife, doth dim (hearts lamp) the eie,
To see the bad to live, or good to die.

Of which fayre bitter sweets, toyle borne, and bred
The husbandes part, ofte standeth in conceipt,
VVhen lawlesse lust, polluteth lawfull bed,
The fathers picture, proues a counterfeite.
Some times discent, is patched by deceit,
VVhen cradle rockes a chaunglinge foysted in,
Defeates true here, defraudes the lawfull kin.

The constancie of Susanna,

But deeme the best, and cownte them all their owne
Vn had, they ar not theirs, when they would haue them,
And once posselt, their title then is knowne,
Not theirs, but his, the mightie Gods that gaue them,
VVhich can in youth, or age, or wombe ingraue them.
Thus is the child wifes choyce, perplext and sad,
And better hope, in husband is not had,

Hast thou a pheere, whose faith exceedeth farre?
If him the mighty monarch, doth commaund,
To prove his martiall armes, in feates of warre,
Midst troopes of bedlem foes, in forreigne land:
How comfortlesse, wil thy poore comfort stand,
VVhile carfull thoughtes, will cause thy hart to morne,
Till ioyfull eie enioy his safe returne.

But if thy wedded mate, bee wedlocke breaker,
How much doth matchlesse greife torment thy minde,
If that hee bee a churle, and cursed speaker,
It killles kinde heart to see him so vnkinde,
Againe is hee to ielous lore enclind?
VVhat toile to tie free actions of thy bed,
To fond survey, of his suspitious head.

If he be good, what fearefull thought to leaue him?
If he be bad, what cunning to reclaime him?
If he be kinde, it grieues thy heart to grieue him?
If he be fierce, what wisdom to refraine him?
If he be lost, what pollicie to gaine him?
If he be loathsome, tis thy taske to loue him;
And no redresse, til death from thee remoue him.

The constancie of Susanna,

But our fond thoughtes saith shee, vvhy do you reason,
Gainst God, my conscience, and the common weale?
Dread heresie, if that you dread not treason.
Be not blind *Essees*, nor so badly deale,
To beate downe mariage, with a virgins veale.
Which were to be iniurious, to my birth,
And leaue no man, to tread the trampled earth.

You partiall p~~ro~~uders, in affections cause;
Crowd impes, that doe conspire, nurse natures end.
You violaters, of Gods first made lawes,
You secta~~ry~~, you foes to mans most friend,
Nice, coy, vnkinde, to country and to kind.
Wast common-weales; and spend your wits in woiing,
Loues lost; the churches downefull; mans vndoing.

VVhilst vnder-mining mariage, with your lore,
You kill the roote, whence all your good began.
The wedded life, of mankinde is the more,
Take mariage from the earth, and vvhere is man?
Man ceasing to haue being; what comes than?
Your owne decay, your death by his decrease,
For when the roote doth rot, the sap doth cease.

As if your earthly being, were too base,
VVith trustlesse vvings, you sore beyond the son.
To draw discent, from ancient *Angel*-race,
You spend wind-wasting wordes, and breathlesse ron.
Perdie you must come downe, vvhen all is done.
Kisse mariage hand, your ancient on the earth,
Vnlesse you will, vvith basenesse blot your birth.

The constancie of Susanna.

As vaine you vaunt of *Angelles* imitation,
Angelles full numbred spirites, doe liue for aie;
But man was made, for fruitfull propagation,
Man must increase, becaule man must decay,
And to that worke, chaste wedlocke was the way.
To tame flesh treasons, and appease those iarres,
Hels rebles raise, to breede soule-flaughtning warres.

Againe, if that you hatch your single brood,
In *Evacs* rib, or *Adams* quickned earth;
Like reason (if it stand with you for good)
For musickes art, like consequence inearth;
Tubulcaines hammers, making maiden mirth.
Tuball from them did frame, mayd *Harmonie*,
Sweete noates consent, hath nam'd her melodie,

What if iust *Habell* choose the virgin life?
And *Salems* king, did die a batch'ler blest?
What if *Elias*, liv'd without a wife?
And single life, lik'd *Elzeus* best?
What if *Messias*, sucke a maiden brest?
One Autumne primrose; doth not proue the spring,
One winter swallow, doth not sommer bring.

What if some few, by gift of speciall grace,
(If God giue not the gift, is nought at all)
Victoriously run out, this virgin race?
Yet many mo in running tooke the fall,
Ev'n when they ment, most finely foote the Ball.
And so haue mist the goale, and to their cost,
Lament too late, things past recovery lost.

The constancie of Susanna.

Yea some which seeme in shevv, to seeke it most,
In secret heart, proue trevants (treasure wasters)
One seely thought, marres all the maiden bost,
Which soone betides, these great tentation tasters,
Yea tis a booke-case, pend by our great masters.

*In vaine chaste flesh a mayden name doth win,
Where yeelding thoughts haue given consent to sin.*

All are not maides, that vow they vwill not wed.
All are not virgins, that are maides esteemed;
All are not chaste, that shun the nuptiall bed.
All are not true *Dianaes*, that are deemed,
Chaste *Sara* was not single, when shee seemed.
Abused *Thamar* wore a virgins weede,
And might haue cloak'd, false *Ammons* foule misdeede.

A droane doth sometimes in a bees place stand,
The single life, no scale of maiden head,
Some batch'lers be, but traitours in the band,
Worse foes to virgin wealth, then those that wed,
Who when the foe appeares, their force is fled;
Like *Gedeons* host (faint cowardes prone to yeeld)
Scant one of ten, is chosen for the field.

Yet quaint encomiaist-like, with wordes at wil,
You paint them out, with praises at your pleasure,
While making hast, to preconize your skill,
You make the coate, before you take the measure,
And to entize, young tyrons with your treasure,
Like gold-sicke *Alchemistes*, you pamper in,
A golden tincture, on a peece of Tin,

What

The constancie of Susanna

VVhat praise peculiar, to the thing you paint;
Which fits not modest marriage, more diuine?
Yet to canonize, maiden-head a saint,
You put no ods, betweene the saint and shrine,
To make a painted brow, the brighter shine,
You parasite, with praises to her face;
And causlesse clowd, dame wedlocke with disgrace;

Nay rather say; this buxome pleasing wife,
VVhile shee her toilesome fieldes, of household tilleth;
And weanes her children, to a Godly life;
In this her care, the Lordes behest fulfilleth,
Sith that shee doth the thing, his wisdom willeth;
And therefore well, may take the vpper-hand,
Offer, vvwhose warrant hath not one command.

Nay rather reason, mariage preservation,
Is lawded, loved, honored, far and neere.
VVhose sacred rightes, haue solemne obseruation;
VVhose ancient priuiledge, hath not his peere,
VVhose daily fruites, are dainties held most deere.
And adde the cause, for which shee is required;
The most commodious things are most desired.

VVhat if her house, be neighbour to annoyes?
The blame be theirs, (not hers that dwelleth by them)
For if we walke, in faire, and easie waies,
That haue some noysome brambles, growing nie them,
That rent our cloathes, before we can descie them;
The fault is not in fairenesse, or the way,
But our owne folly, or the brambles stay,

The constancie of Susanna.

In *Breschith* booke it resteth in record;
(Reporting Register, of mans creation)
That when great *Ihova*, by his powerfull word,
Made shapellese man, to his owne shape and fashion:
He first gaue nuptiall rightes, for propagation.

As glorious ground-worke, where he vould begin,
That building, which his prescience laboureth in.

And did in blessing, knit this sociall band,
Endowd vvith vvorldly empire, and earthes treasure:
Whilst purest nature, did vntained stand,
In easterne *Eden* (place of passing pleasure)
When giving *Adam* of his *Eva*s treasure;
Ioinde two in one, inseperable vnion,
To represent him, and his church communion.

Yea vvhen false man, fell to *Apostasie*,
(Misled by *Sathan*, and his owne freewill)
Had spoild himselfe, and plagu'd his progeny,
And chang'd his seas of ioyes, for flouds of ill;
The matrimoniall state, continued still.
A mithredate, to cure sius poysned sting,
The *Bezoar* stone, that should healt he blessing bring.

For as a playster, to repell despaire,
(Paine ceasing med'cine, to an aking sore)
God promise made, that *Eve* should haue an heire,
Should bruze hell-serpents head, and make him rore;
And to repaire those ruins added more,
To faithfull *Abr'aw*; when he thus professed,
That in his seede all nations should blessed.

When

The constancie of Susanna.

(VVhen eake loves hot-spur, *Lamech* over bold,
VVith one sweete fayre, could not fowle lust suffice,
But let desire go loose, and vncontroll'd,
And chose him mates in number to his eies,
VVhilst following age was wedded to his guise.
True wedlocke went to wracke and nature then,
Straunge mixtures, made straung monsters out of men,

It greived God, to see vngatfull man,
Pollute the earth, with rape and ravishment.
VVhile to sweete bayted sin, all headlong ran,
Ne would in time, become true penitent.
Hee like a champion, full of discontent,
VVith wreakful waters, did these wicked wast,
Not one preserued, but the wedded chaste.

And as it were a warning, hee reto made,
VVhen nature rul'd, with law nuncupative)
How sore hee did detest, flesh-mongers trade.
(Fell traytors that do wedlocks wracke contrine)
From *Sodoms* flames, he kept chaste fower alive.
So to preserve, chaste *Saraes* bed vnspotted,
Hee plagued kings, whom beautie had bee sotted.

But in the true transcript, of Goddes owne hand,
Transplendant star, how bright doth wedlocke shine.
Hee vnderprops her empire, with command
Dyrectes her lore with lawes, as with a line.
Condemnes to death, her subiectes that decline.
And when her peace is rent, by ielous iarres,
Hee sets the way, to cease her civill warres.

An introduction to the story.

And vvhile her lasting glasse of glory ronnes,
He blots her foes faire brow, with fowle disgraces
But doth vouchsafe, to call her children sonnes,
Enfranchizing her fruit, with freedomes mace,
Doth nicke their counterfeite, with name of base.
As slips of sin, and fruites of basest folly,
Whose rootes, he rooteth out, as seede, vnholly.

And that fierce *Mars*, with sterne and sower aspect,
Should nothing hinder, *Venus* influence,
He *Mars* his might, doth countermaund, and checke.
But gues her power, protection and defence,
In maryed mates, to act benevolence.

When to the Brides faire groome, for loue he spares,
One yeare exempt, from warres and worldly cares.

Even so the nations, led by natures light,
(Din scintilles of the soules *synterisfis*)
Did patronize her peace, with good fore-sight:
And to maintaine, her princely port in blisse,
Restrain'd with lawes, wild lust that walkes amisse.
Denouncing death, or danger to her foes,
That darst, gainst their states friend, them selues appose.

Thus hath all times, and tongues, well entertained her,
Gods faithfull servant, and mans fastest friend:
And those condemn'd to shame, that haue disdeign'd her,
And (if I augure right) shall to the end,
When man in vaine, doth gainst the Lord contend?
Ne can the state, or pollititian misse her,
While he for his sweete *Sons* sake, doth blisse her.

VVhole

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhose company giues comfort in distresse,
Two heades at neede, yeeld more advice then one:
Two walkers in the way, may fall redresse,
Two bodies sooner warme, then post alone:
Two hands to helpe are better far then none.
How may man misse her comfort (doe her right)
To passe the lingring day, or tedious night?

Shee concord doth augment, by consanguinity,
Sometimes shee standes, the counterpawne of peace;
Shee doth enlarget loues boundes, by new affinitie:
Shee (arbitrating vmpire,) warres doth cease,
Shee still imploies the common-wealthes, increase.
Her ympes in youth, are loues sweete pawnes and gages,
To parents staues, to stay by in their ages.

VVhose house is held, an *Academie* royall,
Heere *Faith* by doctrine, hath due exercise.
Heere *Dutie* biddes, her children to be loyall,
Heere *Patience* prest, if that extreames arise,
Heere *Loue* in liking heartes, *Hope* never dies.
Heere *Fortitude*, repelles faint feares & offence,
Heere *Mercie* doth, with many a fault dispence.

Heere *Gratitnde*, giues guerdon with good vwill.
Heere *Constancie*, doth checke false waivering *Fame*,
Heere *Humble* minde, doth take nor doe none ill,
Heere *Temp'rance* doth, fond lusts entisements tame,
Heere *Chastitie*, is guardian of good name.
Heere *Labour* (Lasies foe) doth keepe true rich,
Heere *Meane* obserues enough, and not to much.

Heere

The constancie of Susanna.

Heere doth sharpe *Logique*, proue her right with reasons,
Heere *Grammar* traines her ympes, in grounds of speach,
Heere shewes *Astronomie* the starres and seasons;
Heere to accompt *Arithmeticke* doth teach:
Heere *Rhetoricke*, in bad causes plaies the leach.
Heere doth *Geometrie* worke all in measure,
Heere *Musicke* is maintaine'd, to maintaine pleasure.

Heere *Historie*, doth eternize her actes;
Heere *Poetrie* paintes her never dying fame:
Heere *Natures clerkes*, doe authorize her factes.
Heere *Phisicke* stirs, to keepe her health in frame,
Heere *Lawiers* plead, the charter of her name.
Heere *Sophistes* (though like newters standing mute,
Yet) doe not dare against themselves dispute,

Heere sits *Compassion*, porter at her gate,
Prudence purveys, her plenty and her store,
House-keeping *Care*, is steward to this state.
Her liberall hand, is *Almner* to the poore,
Religion leades her life, directes her lore.
Good-order standeth vs her, in her hall,
Iustice controwles, if ought amisse doth fall.

Within her courtes, attendeth on her traine,
The high, the low, the noble and the base,
The stately monarch, and the statelesse swaine,
Priest, prophet, patriarch and the princely race,
The troopes of warlike gallantes, presse for place.
All times, all tongues, all nations farre and neere,
With duties knowledgement, are present heere.

The constancie of Susanna.

No law, no learning, science art, nor skill,
No craft, no cunning, knowledge, or invention,
No state that was, or that continueth still,
No trade, no misterie, that man can mention,
But that it guardes her gates, with good intention,
And when shee passeth by, with seemly greening,
All bow the knee, and thanke her for their beeing.

Thus her al-blessinge auctor, blest her prime,
Thus hath shee gotten glory, from her ground,
Prioritie, from venerable time,
High soveriegnitie, with empire hath her crownd,
All laws (their nurse and foundresse) fence her round,
Fayce *Edens* prayse, doth grace her grovnded fame,
Mans nature (then most pure) doth now the same.

Thus doth her high resemblannce, rowse renowne,
Thus doth her fast coniunction, rayse regard.
Thus doth her soveraigne promise, prayse resowne
Thus was shee made, when all thinges else were mard.
Thus doth *Iehove* him selfe, her greatnesse gard, (ther,
Thus doth Gods church, (her child) comend their mo-
Thus common weales (her wainlings) will none other,

Thus *Nature* aye ennobleth her estate.
Thus *Reason* doth vphold, her reputation,
Thus *Profit* doth her peerlesse estimate,
Thus *Neede* doth tend, her princely preservation.
Thus doth mans life maintaine her estimation.
Thus time doth yeeld, her charters true content,
Prescription custome practize and consent.

Thus

The constancie of Susanna:

Thus doe all times, extend her excellence,
Thus doe all tongues, extoll her rule and raigne,
Thus doe all wittes, afford her best defence.
Thus doe all states, her sacred state maintaine,
Thus doe all sortes of men, attend her traine.
Thus nations all, nobilitate her name,
Thus doe all worldly powers, advance her fame.

Thus happie shee, when all doe pleade for one;
But haplesse you, when one deth speake for all:
You might haue spred your praises and bin gone,
And not chaste mariage name, in question call,
But (lide franke gamsters) sith you venter all,
You that of others, speake the things you should not,
Must be content, to heere the wordes you would not.

If you had blotlesse made, your mistresse brow,
Before you spide the moate, in mariage cie,
You might her right, with better right avow,
Thus truth (though tyred) never went awry.

*In vaine the master findes a limping fault,
Where be himselfe doth stumble, and go haule.*

Your clyent while shee claimes, a single gift,
Doth contradict, the law of propagation;
And with a poore pretence and seely shift,
Denies man comfort, (cause of her creation)
Flies from old *Euaes* faith, to newer fashion.

Deprives her seede, lifes blessing in the land,
Her selfe th' obedience, God doth first command.

Yes

The constancie of Susanna.

Yea while fine nature, worketh in her kinde,
Deathes ruines so repaire, in lifes repriue;
(To liue for aie, in those shee leaues behinde)
Shee laboureth still, to leaue her like aliue,
And neuer die her selfe, whilst they suruiue.

You (while you crosse this kindly worke of nature)
Would liue your selues, but leaue none other creature.

And where the nations, to vphold their state,
Coherse with lawes, and shame, the single life,
Your selues (as lawlesse) lawes doe antiquate,
Set barren sect against the bearing wife.
Thus wage you warre thus stirre you endlesse strife;
Thus swaying in selfe will, your will withstandeth,
What natures biddes, and God himselfe commandeth.

And thus your life, resembleth desolation,
Your bodies graues, to burie babes vnborne;
Your vow a cord, to strangle propagation,
(Far better ill-kept vowes, weare left vnsworne)
Your thoughts fierce foes, to leaue you kin forlorne.
Your willes flat worldlings, (while you temporize)
Your tongues in wedlockes wracke, doe scandalize.

God mariage made, in commanding moode,
And what he biddes, the same we must obey;
But mayden life, commended is for good;
Where is command, commending beares small sway,
Therefore to stint this strife I boldly say,

*If God giue grace, the single life doth well,
If not such gift, then marriage doth excell.*

The constancie of Susanna.

Be quiet then sweetethoughtes, lets rest agreee;
Let marriage haue, deserved commendation:
Let virgins haue (that virgins are indeede)
Due praise, renowne, and sacred obseruation;
True maide, true vvife, in thought and conuersation.

Both holy in the Lord; the one as wife,

The osher as a maide, in single life.

Thus her soules sences, held a long dispute,
And sillogize their reasons *pro & con*;
While minde (the moderatour) standeth mute,
VVhat's vnresolved, to resolute vpon:
At length shee thus cōcludes, (when thoughts were gon)

Sith God made Eve, least man should liue alone,

Shee was of man, and not Pigmaliions stone.

When *Fame* the light-foote (titling babe by birth)
False spie, that into secrets makes intrusion,
Tale-bearing paritour, to mone and mirth,
Foule-fleering blab, truthe's traitour and confusion,
Had tane by top, the tale of her conclusion,
Shee spreds with speede, the motiue of her marying,
Pretending hast, as if there were no tarying.

Whence came to passe, that troopes of corrivals,
Like eager houndes to get a gallant pray;
Doe poast with speede, not caring what befalls,
To win the goale, and beare the price away,
They flaunt it out, in traine and rich aray.

To get the fauour, of this gracious faire,

That is so buxome, and so debonaire.

The constancie of Susanna.

Some offer stately dower, some princely gifts,
Some honors hight, and to aduance her kin.
Some bare of these do sue with loue-sicke shifts,
Pawne sighes sad looks, straung vowes, they make no sin,
To sweare for- sweare, this golden fleece to win.
Each streignes his thoughts, his rivall to beguile,
VVhilst in her iowre lurks death, life in her smile.

But as the mounting Eagle, in the winde,
Disdeines to stoope and checke base flockes of flies,
Or as club griping *Heracles*, by kinde,
Doth single combate, with a dwarfe dispise,
VVhose force his manhood, doth not equalize,
So thee doth scorne, to fawne on such a friend,
VVhose faith doth soone beegin, and sooner end.

Yet as in gardens, whear all herbes do grow,
Some fragrant are, whose sweetenesse doth excell,
Though some eie-pleasing lillies trimlie shew,
VVhen as they yeeld the sent, a loathsome sinell,
So some there weare, might please her eie full well.
And by sweete vertues odor, fume her sent,
VVith grace auromaticke, and redolent.

For as, while those bright globes of rare account,
And splendant plannets, in their spheeres do ronne,
One is superior, and doth all surmount,
VVithout compare, aye glorious shininge sonne,
So in this gloabe of gallantes, thear stode one,
VVhose neate bechavior, grace, and bounty bright,
Did dim the rest, as sonne the candle light.

An introduction to the story.

Renowned *Ioachim*, thou the man admired,
Both of the *Chaldeaes*, and the *Iewish* nation,
Thou weart of all regarded, and desired.
Greate was thie wealth, so was thie reputation;
Thy life an obiect, worthie contemplation.
That didst with *Tuus*, purchase thee a frend,
Each day beefore the soune, his course did end.

Thou didst not with gnuiffe *Crasus*, hoord thy wealth.
Thou weart with *Cato* rich, when once contented.
Thou hatedest *Cesars*, pride, which was the pelfe,
That cauld his death, which hee to late repented,
Thou hadst *Iobs* waxen heart, which still relented,
If orphanes cride, if widdowes wanted right,
If poore men said, they wear opprest by might,

Thou weart a *Moses* in maintayning lawes.
Thou didst sell *Pharaos*, goverment, detest.
Thou with the *Machies*, in thy countries cause,
Wouldst pawne that heart, that harbord in thy brest.
Thou ever heldst *Manasses* wayes, vnblest.
Thou weart a polititian, graue and wise,
Yet free from that flie tricke, to temporize.

What heart so iudurate, that Would not yeeld,
Whear vertues puissant valor, stroue to win;
What minde so obstinate, to take the feild,
Gainst those fine partes, whose matches scant have bin
Sure causelesse to reiect him, & weare foule sin.
Whearfore her thoughtes, well trayned in their good,
Do entertaine his suite, with gracious moode,

The constancie of Susanna.

For as a *Diamond* rich, (through vertue rare)
To it the gads of sturdie Steele doth draw:
And as the youth - worne *less*, by like compare,
Bestowes his power attrative on the straw,
So sweete *Susanna*, not compeld by awe,
But led to love, by like heartes *Sympathie*,
Did yeeld his eares, his wished heartes replie.

VVho thought him selfe to bee the happiest wight,
VVhen shee became (not hers but) his desired,
VVhen shee had made surrender of her right,
The ioy, the comfort, which his heart required,
VVhile to obtaine that pray hee more aspired,
Then conquer'ing *Alexander*, to subdue,
A world far wider, then the world hee knew.

O peerelesse purchaze fownd by few or none.
O pleasant conquest, pleased conqueror,
VVhilst true content, triumpheth in lous throane,
More rightly rich, then *Asiaes* emperor,
The price was vertue, thou the vanquishor.
For in thy pris'ner, with a princely port,
Residinge vertues, held their royall court.

VVithin the closet, of whose cloysest pleasure,
(Neat cabbonet for vertues sweete repose)
Nature and *Grace*, had hid their finest treasure,
And left it all to *Constancies*, despoise.
(A trustie guardian, for such goodes as those)
Amongst which glorious graces, in her brest,
Bright *Chastitie* was seen, aboue the rest,

The constancie of Susanna.

Shee seated in a seate which vertue placeth,
A royall throne (the soule and minde diuine)
As onely grace, that every vertue gtaceth,
Is canopied with *Fayth* (most pure and fine)
Like *milkie-way*, with circling *Cristalline*.
And at her knees, aie kneele, (and parte not thence)
Transparent puritie, and (Gods gifte) *Continence*.

And to vphold her high, and heau'nly state,
Shee hath for guard, attending on her traine,
Sobriestie (truthes friend, and vices hate)
Foresight (that euill occasions doth refraine)
Dunbe tongue, dead *heart*, blinde *eye*, deafe *ears*, sad *braine*.
Well guided thoughts; a hand and foote not idle;
Sterne abstinence, that head-strong lust doth bridle.

O *chastitie* (thou beautie of the minde)
Vnspotted *puritie* in things vnpure,
The comliest ornament of woman kinde;
Were not this seate most slippry and vnure,
Thou wouldst in all and not in few indure.
But thy light foes, false title, of true pleasure,
Thee loathed makes, her loved out of measure.

Yea since thy friends in shew, but foes indeede,
Vaine Tutors taught, their pupils how to spell,
For *caste*, *came*; and to serue fowle neede,
If chastly want, that cloassly doth doe well;
This moriue made, some subiects to rebell,
Who by pretence, to vnderprop thy crowne,
In secret make assaultes, to pull thee downe.

The constancie of Susanna,

VVhose prowd *Essenian* high-priest, *Rabbena*,
To canonize thy saint, wil kisse thy shrine.
Yet not with *Aaron* choose chaste *Elisaba*,
But like that *Levite* vse his concubine,
Yea if thou dost thy selfe, in marriage ioine,
They blesse thy name, as sacred one of seven,
Yet ban thine act, as most vnworthy heaven.

Oneighing lades, fast friendes to infamie,
Nurses to naughtinesse, lewd bawdes to lust,
Base vassalles, to your willes *Apostasie*,
Why doth not *Conscience*, checke your deedes vniust?
VVhy doth not sad *Dispaire*, drowne in distrust,
Those temptors of these sacred *Nymphes* to sin?
VVhom rape may not enforce, nor flattery win,

Delightsome flowers, doe quickly fall and fade,
And budding beauty blasteth, in small space;
But constant *Chast*, thy sonne goes not to glade,
No age nor eating time, can thee deface,
VVhile vertue thee, thou vertue, dost iinbrace,
Thou gracest *Susan*, having thee in hold,
As richest lemme, doe grace the finest gold.

Her *Amber* tresses, made a seemely shew;
Her milke-white skin, adorned natures skill,
Yet all did vanish, as the liquid devv,
VVhile *Chastitie* remaines eternall still,
VVhy then are vvomen vvedded to vaine vvill?
That for a wanton momentanie pleasure,
They (wilful) vvaist an everlasting treasure.

The constancie of Susanna

Had *Susan* bin, of their vnsstable minde,
To sel eternitie to get a toy;
Shee had not left such noted fame behinde.
But had bin tited, faith-lesse, fondly coy,
VVhich did relinquish lust, for lasting ioye.
And left her loved name, to be eternall;
But those that wrong'd the same, like fendes infernal.

For when her choice, did yeeld a vvorldes delight,
And ioies did soare, aboue the reach of sorrow;
VVhen settled thoughtes, secure of worldly spight,
And barge of blisse, high fortunes seas did forrow,
Then flattering night, brought foorth a doleful morrow.
What time her gracious God, did hold it best,
To blaze abroade, what harbord in her brest.

For as he faithfull *Abrahams* heart, did proue,
By willing offring, of his guiltlesse sonne;
And tride *Iobs* stable faith, and constant loue,
What time sle *Sathan*, his consent had wonne,
To leaue *Iobs* health forlorne, and wealth vndone:
Even so he sifted, *Susans* constancie,
If that shee would, her pure faith falsifie.

And to complot this treason, by temptation,
False *Sathan* had, fit men, fit time, fit place;
VVas never foe so fitted for invasion,
The plot once laid he would not bate an ace,
The price was shame (her glories dim disgrace)
The meanes, the men, the time, the place, thus fittes;
Yet *Sathan* prov'd a foole, and shallow witted.

VVhile

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhile flattering time, could not her thoughts content,
Convenient place, had no convenient praie,
Though nobles sought her fames disparagement,
Yet had more noble heart, a constant naie,
A Iudges wordes, gainst iustice beare no sway.

Gray haire, (grim sutors) argued youthes greene follie,
Their vele of Priest-hood made them more, ynhollic.

Such were the wightes, that would this Ladie wrong,
Sowere their hearts, addicted to vile actions,
That their lust-fostred thoughtes, did wholie long,
On harmelesse *Chastitie*, to raise exactions.

VVhy should stout nobles stoope to base detractions?

VVhy should such ympious ympes, haue rule of all,
Whose thoughts are bale, and bond-slaues vnto thrall.

VVoe to that place, where law is turn'd to lust,

VVoe, to that land, where rulers fall to sin.

VVoe to that state, where might doth say I must.

VVoe to the wrong'd, that seeketh right of him,

VVho forceth not of good, or right a pin.

But makes the earth, the obiekt of his eies,

Because he would, both God and heav'n despise.

Thou God which dost, fell tyrans rage detest,

VVhy sustrest thou such wolues, to tyrannise?

VVhy are thy seely lamkins so opprest?

And doth not mercie in thy brest arise?

Sure thou art merciful, in this thy guise.

In giving Tyrantestime, for to repent,

And fruitfull patience, to the innocent,

The constancie of Susanna.

A rare example, of which righteous loue,
Doth in this ladies life, at large appeare;
VVhom tyrant stride, vvhether shee vvould remoue,
Her heart from thee, (her loving Lord most deere)
But thee in thee, remaind the vanquisher;
VVhen thou didst raise, young *Daniell* in her right,
And put her shamelesse foes, to shameful flight.

For when the nuptiall rightes, had due dispatch,
And solemne lawes, fast knit the sociall band,
By writing made, attenticke of the mach.
VVhen first *Helchia*, gaue his daughters hand,
Before the states, and seniors of the land;
That yeare aduanced were, to iudgement seate,
Those hell-taught hirclings, fit for *Sathans* seate,

For while this tender lady, taught her will,
T' attend her liked loue, and Lordly mate,
The captiue *Iewes*, in troopes resorted still,
To iet in *Ioachims* courtes, and there debate,
Of meanes, to mannage their forlorne estate;
To rowse religion, and awake their law,
Borne downe by bondage, breeder of their awe,

So to erect a secret *Sanhedrin*,
They singled forth two seniors, from the best,
Graue, Aged, learned, wise, of noble kin,
For to expound the law, and rule the rest,
But they vvich seem'd in shew what they profest,
In prooffe were *Behais* broode; base slippes of *Cane*,
In faith false *Apostates*, men vile, and vaine,

These

The constancie of Susanna.

These long frequented, noble *Ioachims*' place,
Grim fires severe, like *Aristarchus* brow,
Seem'd nothing popular; could not the grace,
To kisse the hand, or stoope the stately bow,
But (though with halting) onely well knew how,
To render right, without regard of gaine,
Which made contending troopes, attend their traine.

But modest ladie, (Ladie modestie)
Shee to avoide the presse, in this repaire,
And shun the gaze, of every glauncing eye,
VVould to her garden walke to take the aire:
A fine contrived plot and passing faire;
Hem'd in with stately walles vvhich lik'd her vvell,
(Chast cloistred nymp, within to sweete a cell.)

And when the presse vvas past, and coast vvas cleere,
Vnto her home, her settled pase shee bendes:
VVhere oft shee findes her Lord, and loving Pheere,
Conferring vvith those teniors, his good friendes.
To whom (for *Ioachims* loue) good looke shee lendes.
Secure of lust; shee deemd their age more stable,
Their faith more holy, thoughtes more honorable.

But in plaine-meaning trust, false treason lurkes,
Slie *Sathan* hence, gate breath to blow lustes fire.
At which their melting heartes, he softly workes,
So that they take, th' impression of desire,
And so did bend, to vvhat he vvould require.
Thus with faire stales, he baiteth buzzardes eyes,
To teach these dotardes trickes, to wantonize.

The constancie of Susanna:

The silver heares/sterne sum'nors to the graue)
Are dipt in die-pot, and vuell taught to fal,
In curled tuftes, like yonkers neate and braue.
(No *Peruge* yet had *Peru* scene at al)
While withered limmes would youthes delights recal;
The spundge, the combe, the glasse, doe wait at hand,
To cleere the wrinckled skin, that age had tand.

Th' *Arabian* odors, mend a noisome fault:
Each word, each looke, each gesture smackes of art,
The limping legge begins to leape and vault.
VVhen *Cupid* shootes, where death should thrill his dart,
Old waggies excede to play the wantons part.
And then though folly, giue themselues the fal,
Yet must sweete beauty beare the blame of al,

So things wel ment, are oftentimes mistaken,
Sometimes the harmelesse eie, doth feece offence,
Sometimes faire dutie, makes his friend forsaken,
Sometimes foule faultes, are hid by faire pretence.
So were these seniors, snared by true sence.

VVhen (burnd not by the fire, but by the light)
They were entrap'd, by thar true spie, the sight.

VVhile chaff, concentricke circles of her eies,
Like sphericke sections, cut by curious art,
Reflect the wanton beames, which gainst them flies,
Backe to the darke some dungeon, of the heart,
Makes Liver loue-sicke, poysons every part.

Makes reason, and heartes passions, disagree;
Makes that which was not, what it should not be.

The constancie of Susanna.

Fie on fine beautie, that dost bane thy breeder,
Fie on false honor, that betrayst thy friend,
Fie on thee foolish feature, thou eie feeder.
Fie on vnstedfast riches, friendes vnkinde.
Fie on choice education (art thou blinde?)
Fie on fit time, alluring bawd to evil,
Fie on fit place, a broker for the diuel.

These were the traitours, that entisementes gaue,
To blinde concupiscence, and bedlem lust,
To hood winke vertue, and at reason raue,
That bids be bold, and banish faint distrust.
Pretendes the purchase good, and title iust.
Perswades it cowardise, to daunt for shame,
VVhere greater conquest winnes the greater fame.

And yet they deem'd her vertues, farre to great,
Her thoughtes to high, to stoope to base desire,
Which did not coole, but much augment the heate.
Great logges laid on, doe most encrease the fire,
Beate downe by doubtles, stout lust doth clim the higher.
When struggling streames, with strongest baires are bent,
Then flowdes doe twell, and rage most insolent.

And so while raging lust, out-reacheth reason,
(Like bended waues they surge about the bankes)
Displease their friendes, and selues, and al to please one,
Leaue law, and right, to play vnlawful pranks;
Vow great attempts, not worthy smallest thanks.
Grow carelesse, resolute in dissolution;
Bewitch'd with beauties blaze, to worke abusioⁿ.

Thus

The constancie of Susanna.

That those, which vvhilome did like *Martiall* vvighthes,
VVeild *Mars* his weapons, and were manly men;
Become nice *Sybarites*, faint hearted knights,
Forlake the field, to diue in *Cyprius* den,
Resigne the Eagles empire, to the wren.
Obscure *Herculean* fortitude, and fame,
By childish service, off some *Lydian* dame.

For as the fish that (of his force to stoppe)
Hight *Remora*, (much like the scellie snail)
Can stay the ship, of loftie tallest toppe,
Gainst force of oares, and furious winded saile;
So some whose fame, high fortune could not faile.
Amidst their happiell course, are forst to staie,
By lust-fed loue, or else as weake delay.

So soveraignes oft, come subiectes to their sin,
Whilst those that should not, soonst are slaues to lust,
Men what they must not, most are prone to win,
Which makes trimme vertue, dragled in the dust.
When rulers are (as yron worne vvith rust)
Consum'd with loue, then countries fall to sinne,
As heere you see these iudges doe beginne.

VVho oft were bent (by reasons *Ecstasies*)
VVith club-fist violence, and clownish force,
To breake into that princelie *Pyramis*,
And batter downe, her wel-built walles perforce,
If milde entreatie, might not moue remorse.
Or bold perswasions, blinde the eies of reason,
Or subtile teates, surprise the fort by treason.

The constancie of Susanna.

Thus oft they ment, to make a rash assault;
More oft they seeke, vile opportunitie,
And most doe muse, how they maie cloake the fault,
If mad desire, accomplished might be,
Their withered hoping hearts thinke long to see.
The fruit of their vntimelic, sprouting lust;
Th' event whereof, they held in deepe distrust.

Each daie these graybeardes, kisse the garden dore,
To see at least the shadow of their Saint,
And through the slender crannies, prie and pore,
To feede the humor that doth make them faint,
So doth her peerelesse hue their eies attaint.
That aie to gaze on her, they doe require;
As on sweete speckled *Panthers* beastes desire.

Each daie for fervent loue, of this faire goddesse,
They gad on pilgrimage, to her sweete shrine.
Each daie fowle lust, did feede in fainting bodies,
On fresh recording, of her beauties shine,
Each day they be repleate, and yet doe pine.
While outward obiect nursing inward anguish,
Abates the looke and makes the life to languish.

Thus doth delay, not lessen but increase,
The furious fittes, of their rebellions soare.
And though they would, a parlee for their peace,
Yet want they meanes, her favour to implore,
VVhich makes them wish, to be within the dore,
VVith her alone, that they might worke their vwill,
To pray or force her, to that cursed ill,

They

The constancie of Sufanna.

They wondred greatly, at each others grieve,
Yet want the skil, the secret cause to know,
Though friendly hand, be prest to yeeld reliefe,
Yet fingred pulse, cannot bewray their woe,
And shame doth blush, such shamefull partes to shew.
While neither knowes, that either is entangled,
With that sharpe hooke, wherewith himselfe is angled.

Til time, that pend, the prologue in this play,
And did pretend, some pleasing comedy:
By statly ruffling actors, did bewray,
Shee ment to staine the stage, and standers by,
VVith tragique blood, in fel *Catastrophie*.
And sending opportunitie with speede,
To fit occasion, bids them both proceede.

For on a day, vvhhen *Cynthia* lampe of light,
Had with his golden beames, embolt the skie,
And (climbing from the circle bounding sight)
Neere to the noone-steed line, vvas mounted hie,
VVhen *Nature* did on customes lore relie,
To vnder-propt her weakenesse, with repast,
That now grew faint, and feeble with long fast.

Then at kind *Ioachims* gates, these seniors part,
(Vntrusting traitours, to so true a friend)
And to their severall houses, doe revert.
But leaue in pawne, vn bodied hearts behinde.
(Not where it liues but loues remains the minde)
They doe repose, their friend-shippe on their foe?
They leaue sweete life in gage, yet home they goe.

VVhere

The constancie of Susanna.

VWhere lazie rest, did ransacke all their vaines,
Choice of delightes, doe breed no choice of ease,
The wayward worme, vvithin their adled braines,
Was nibbling still, nothing but one could please,
The feathered seate, doth seeme a nest of fleas.
The princely banquets, held a homely diet,
The Doricke musicke, makes the minde vnquiet.

The cookes controld, the meate not seasoned well,
The courtly waitor, seemes a cartly clowne,
The fragrant odors, yeeld a loathsome smell.
Who looketh sad, he thinkes on him doth frowne,
Who laughes out-right, doth envie his renowne.
Who wispreth in the care doth him reprove,
Who praiseth beauty, robbes him of his loue.

His loue? not shee graue ladie, first his loue,
Whose breasts did breed, youtnes sweet contētments wel,
His eies as blinde in choice, he doth reprove,
For *Ioachims* choice, all choices doth excell,
His neighbours sheepe (not his) must beare the bell.
Sweete *Susan* (none but shee) is worthy honor,
His *Deborah* not worthy to waite on her,

Fond, testy, wayward, waspish, out of tune,
His giddy head, doth tossle his trencher round,
His hastie heart is fierce, doth fret, and fume,
His knife doth feele, his passions to abound,
His restless foote, doth grate the harmelesse ground.
Each punct of time, doth seeme a lingring morrow,
The meale is short, when as the sawce is sorrow.

Therefore

The constancie of Susanna.

Therefore to seeke more ease, in pleasing place,
They post alone, vnto the garden dore.
VVhere one of them not staide, a breathing space,
But that his corryvall, is come to shore,
VVhere never boath, (till then) did meete before.
And then to soone; for false occasion then,
Did plot the fall, of these vnfaithfull men.

For train'd by time, each one acquaintes the other,
How beauties blaze, in *Susans* modest eie,
Had set drie lust on fire, vvhich did not smother,
(VVithin their withered breastes) but burning flie,
Like fierie dragon, in the flaming skie.
Which forst them to forget, their God their king,
And binde best hope, vnto a hopelesse thing.

They pause a space, what best to doe resolving,
Like two fierce Beares, of greedie appetite.
Devising meanes, and in their mindes revolving,
If that shee will not wrong, her *Ioachims* right,
They would enforce her then, by force and might.
Yet heere a guiltie conscience, laies a barre,
To stop this course, and their devises marre.

Saith one of them shall we commit this evill?
Shall freemen borne, be bond-slaves vnto sinne?
Shall we embrace the flesh, to kisse the Divell?
Shall we controlling vice, to vice beginne?
Shall we so famous, thus defame our kinne?
(My Lord) we must suppress, these prowd assaults,
Else shall we great ones, make the greater faulces.

The constancie of Susanna.

The rule by vvhich all other rules, are tried,
Must beare a true proportion, every way.
And vwant the smallest faultes, that maie be spied,
So kings and seniors, that doe beare the sway,
Must liue to rule, and yet the lawes obey.
Else how should they blacke sin, rebuke and blame,
VVhen they themselues are guilty in the same?

A mole is speed'lie spied, in the face,
VVhen in the bodie blaines, are vnperceaved.
One seely misle will yeeld vs, more disgrace,
Then though the vnderling, and poore aggrieved,
VVere of al roiall vertues, quite bereaved.
For rulers are, the looking-glasse, the booke,
In which all subiects eies, doe reade and looke.

O let vs then remember, theres a God,
A God, whose searching eie, hath deepest seeing,
A God, whose providence, doth never plod,
A God, in whom we moue, and haue our being,
A God, to whom each sinne, is disagreeing.
A God, that will not winke, at this misdeede,
A God, that will inflict revendge, vvith speede.

But heere I see, a cursed fawning pleasure,
That freez'th my soule, yet burn' th my heart with lust.
That doth torment my minde, beyonde all measure,
And over-rules (me ruler) with I must.
Then tel me brother whereto both shall trust.
For my poore trembling heart, is so tormented,
That I the act (vnacted) haue repented.

The constancie of Susanna.

His sad colleage, vvho all this time gaue care,
VVith good attention, to this wavering tale,
Did seeme as though, he held his counsaile deere;
But in his brest, they bred most deadly bale,
So sorrow suckt his bloud, that he lookt pale.

And staggering paus'd, what answere best to make him,
Or take advice, what course he should betake him.

At length from sin-flowing soule, (as flame from fire)
He belloweth out, hoat-breathed brutish wordes:
I must vvith speed, effect my hearts desire,
Commaunding lust, no longer pause affords,
No, though mine obiekt, were ten thousand swords,
Ne can my spirit repressse, so fierce a foe,
My vvil is bent, my heart vvil haue it so.

A good phyfition, may his patient cure,
If he be carefull, of the vvound in season:
But carelesse, if he let it long indure;
He findes at length, not one sufficient reason,
How of a festred vlcet, he might ease one.

So if in time, I had this plague prevented,
I should haue had no time, to haue repented.

But now my wound, out-reacheth reasons skill,
It festreth inward, and so hurts my heart,
That I must bend, to my rebellious will.

(Vnlesse I wil endure, an endlesse smart)

I vvould, some *Pythouisse* could vvorke by art,

Or man of God by praier obtaine the skil,

To turne my heart, from this intended il.

The constancie of Susanna.

But twil not be; I cannot haue redresse,
Dispaire doth stop the way, to former state.
I must therefore to her, my griefes expresse,
And worke by griping might, and forced hate;
If that shee vwill not be, compassionare.

Thus I resolue, my thoughts are past relenting,
And carelesse I (my Lord) of your consenting.

Yet while sinnes grieve, would heale his soules consũption
Foorth steps the temptour, and to stop restraint,
Doth beare him vp with winges, of prowd presumption;
Biddes hope be stable, and his faith not faint;
Thy God (saith he) with mercy heeres complaint.

If thou to him, thy acted sinnes deplore,
He heales with speede, and salues thy smarting soare.

And what? thy slippe is but a veniall sinne,
Fine natures fault, (or else no fault at all)
The saved Saints themselues, haue sinners binne,
The steddiest foote, sometimes doth take a fall,
No shame to trip, but being downe to, cawle.

VVhat if graue age, of wantonnesse reprove thee?

The blame be hers, whose matchles parts did moue thee,

Thus subtile *Sathan*, faines (to shift a carde)
That vice is vertue, and foule-sinne sa'vation:
And that condigne, our works are of reuward,
VVhen as our deeds, are vvorthy condemnation,
To build presumptuous sinnes, on Gods compassion,
He brings sinnes warnings, warrants vnto sinne,
VVhile thus to pray, his pupill doth beginne.

The constancie of Susanna.

O God (saith he) doe not behold this sin,
But if thou dost, yet doe thou not reiect vs,
For moe thy seruantes haue offenders bin,
Therefore (O Lord) doe not to shame detest vs,
Nor with thy heavy-falling hand, correct vs.
Sith we are not the first, that haue transgressed,
Thy sacred precepts, in thy law exprest.

Old *Adam* fell, and yet thou didst relieue him,
Thou hast forgotten, *Nobahs* drunkenness:
Lottes sin was greater, yet thou didst forgive him;
Thy hearts-loue *David*, *Vrie* did oppresse,
And made his wife, his lustes adulteresse.
High-seated *Salomon*, (that held his throne)
Fel to fond lust, and had more faultes then one.

Al these (and moe thy seruants) lest thy lawes,
Yet did thy mercies largesse pardon all:
VVhy should I then, haue longer time to pause?
Or dread the storme, ere it begin to fall?
No, no, poore heart, I will no thoughtes fore stall.
Invent the way, to win thy choice delight,
And this my hand, shal helpe vvith maine and might.

He making might, the period of his speach,
Entreates his mate, to censure his conclusion,
Protesting that no reason, should out-reach,
Or interrupt, his settled resolution.
VVhile thus he resteth carelesse of confusion,
His partner doth impart, his thoughtes replie,
And leades amisse, vvhat went before awry.

The constancie of Susanna.

Senior(saith he) rash is this enterprise,
Hast-making marchantes,often marre good marte,
Lettes pawle a space, our hast may prodigize,
Let first a fawning cie, to her impart,
The loue-sicke passions, of a friendly heart.
Let sighes entreate, let lookes our loue vnfold,
Lets tempt her truth, with traitrous gobs of gold.

Lets hire some B. to boord her with perswasions,
That letter hath more cunning, then the Ka.
Lets court her oft, with stately salutations,
Lets sift the secrets, of our *Cabala*.
Lets looke in *Bresish* booke, and *Marcana*.
What hearb, what stone, what word, hath power in loue,
Lets try their force, and every vertue proue.

VVe read in bookes of *pendants*, and of *potions*,
Of figures fra n'd, with quaint *charecterismes*,
Of Mawmets made by art, to plannets motions,
Of direfull wordes, and powerfull *exorcismes*,
Of curious feates, to raise loues *paroxismes*.
If heaven will not heere, lets sue to hell,
The *Fayries* haue great force, old wiues can tell.

Lets then hunt out, some old *Hecatean* hagge,
That can eclipse the moone, and clowde the sonne:
Sweepe hilles away, and cause the grownd to wagge:
Make headlong streames, backe to their heads to ron,
Raile spirites(as *Saul* in *Endor* saw was done)
Worke mindes as wax, make wayward will, loues thrall,
Lets trie their skill, before we venture all.

The constancie of Susanna:

But out fond lingring leaches, to sicke loue,
VWhile you provide, your patient doth decay:
Let leasures guests, your paltry phylicke proue,
Our sickenesse is impatient of delay,
Therefore (sweet Senior) let vs hast away,
Into this happiest orchard, there to hide vs,
To try what better fortune doth abide vs.

VWhich said: these dotards sneake in at the gate,
(False traitor to take in his ladies foes)
And (being in) fly foxes they debate,
VWhere best to finde fit couch, for to repose,
And shrowd themselues, from gazing eies disclose.
Till trustlesse time, might pay the hoped hire,
Their hunger-starved lust, did so desire.

And standing thus at gaze, at length they spie,
A spreading palme, (fit arbour for to feast in)
VWhose wreathe d boughes, and branches clowd the sky.
This louely bower, these brothels choose to rest in.
(To neat a perch, for such night owles to nest in.)
VWhere flowring *Camomill*, did cloath the ground,
VWith *Rose* and *Eglantine*, enclosed round.

VWhile heere they lurke, with pleasing shrubs inshrinde,
Faire sights, fresh aire, doth yeeld them little ease.
VWhile conscience sting doth gaule, the guilty minde,
Their swelling thoughtes, doe strue like struggling seas,
No object of the eie, or eare, doth please.
They dread the leaues, with wavering wil bewray the,
Or twidling birdes, with taunting tunes betray them.

The

The constancie of Susanna.

The whistling winde, amongst the trembling trees,
Doth force the head to aile, and heart to ake,
The harmelesse humming, of the toying Bees,
Doth cause the legges to quiver, hands to quake.
Least *Ioachim* them suspect, and tardy take,
VVherefore the fearefull eie, doth loath the light,
And long to haue, sin-shrowding darke some night.

And while they both reuolue their case; (saith one)
I had a dreame, (God turne my dreame to good)
Mee seem'd we sitting, on the iudgement throne,
Our seate fell downe, into a streame of blood;
And both we drenched in the crym(en) flood.
In sleepe I strone, and struggled (wanting breath)
To scape those waues, that did conspire our death.

VVhich terror made my feareful flesh so tremble,
Vnneathes I could, my perfect senses finde.
Cease (quoth his mate) no more, dreames oft dissemble.
Dreames are deceites, as wavering as the winde,
They never daunt, a full resolved minde.
A fainting heart, i shall never loose the pray,
VVhich (mawgre dreames) I meane to win this day,

Thus are those seniors, sold to desolation,
VVho doth not see their soules subdude to sin?
VVhilst their lust-hardned hearts, by no perswasion,
Can be recald, from what they did begin.
But bent to venture all, vn Timer to win.
Like ravening beares, bereaved of their whelpes,
They sit alone, devising many hel pes,

The constancie of Susanna.

Devising manie helpes, to worke their will,
To vvrest or winne her, to their loathed lure:
O that such Tygers fierce, her seeke to spill.
O that such drowfie droanes, should be secure,
To creepe into a hiue, vnstain'd and pure.
To tast that *Nectar*, and *Hyblean Honie*,
That none but one could winne, for loue or monie.

O hearts much harder, then the *Adamant*,
O chartes of sinne, mappes of impietie.
Are you the men, that vices should supplant?
Doe you (in shew) adore the dietie?
And seeke in secret, sinnes varietie?
O doe but thinke, there comes a iudgement daies;
Where such misdeedes, cannot be wip'd awaie.

But your hearts, harbour nought, but ravishment,
You follow *Tereus* vaine, in villanie.
You carelesse how to die, or to repent,
Do liue secure of shame, and infamie,
And thinke on nought, but oportunitie.
To perpetrate, your vvicked leu'd intent,
In which already, many daies are spent.

But all daies now, are passed and expired,
In vvch you liv'd twixt hope, and grimme dispaire.
VVhen time hath brought you, vvhere you most de
Even to that orchard, where most holosome aire,
Doth kisse the creature, which you held most faire.
Inurious time, vvhy didst thou serue her so,
VVhich never vvvas or ment to be thy foe?

VVhy

The constancie of Susanna.

VWhy didst thou seeke, & enthrall a sacred soule?
VWhy didst thou seeke to traine her vnto lust?
VWhy dost not oportunitie controule?
VWhich seekes to draine her honour in the dust?
O flattering oportunitie vniust,
Fit slaue to fallie *Sathans* lewd designement,
VWhen thy compeere, fit place, yeeldes entertainment.

O God vvhy hast thou set, the ravening wolfe,
Vpon the poore, and harmelesse lamb to pray?
VWhy didst thou let her scape, (*baribdis* gulfe,
For to (by *Scylla* rocke) be cast away?
Thou hast vpheld her, happie to this daie,
And now must light, in Lyons ravening iawes,
And plead to eares, that know no right nor lawes.

For when the sunne (neere sommer tropicke seated)
VWith bright reflected beames, did all reate:
And westvvard from the southerne line, retreated,
Did make the foggie heart, in shade to sweate,
And croaking raven, gape and pant for heate.
Then did *Susanna*, to her vvalke repaire,
In shadowed seate, to take fresh cooling aire.

VWhere with her mates demure, (two modest maides)
Shee shrowds her selfe in shrubs, neere pleasant spring:
(Like harmelesse *Elfes* the fountaine fairy *Naiads*)
VWhere waters rush, and chirping birdes doe sing,
And art with nature, framd a curious thing.
A stately conduit, whence sweete streames distilled,
VWhich vnderneath, a sumptuous cesterne filled.

An introduction to the story.

In which this vertuous dame, was wont to bath her,
VVhen lawful rightes, such homage did require.
And now (to soone) induced much the rather,
Because sun-burning beames, did fry like fire,
VVherefore (shee saith) good wentches home retire.
And bring the soape, the cloathes and things I neede,
Shut fast the dores, returne againe with speede,

VVith due obeylance, and a bashfull smile,
They yeeld the looke, of readie servitude,
And with officious foote, they post awhile,
Vnto the garden dores, and them occlude,
To stop each stranger out, that might intrude,
And by a posterne gate, they post away,
And yet quicke wantons, make to tedious stay.

Thus left alone (good lady voide of feare)
Shee serues her God, with solitarie muse,
Secure what birdes of rapine, roosted there,
That ment her wretch, in their sharpe clawes to bruse,
And vnprophaned bodie, to abuse.
O little doth shee know, what serpentes lurke,
In traitrous place, to pray on natures worke.

Had shee *Diana* bin (as poets faine)
VVhen these *Alecons*, pried through the vwood;
Shee as *Diana* did, would them constrain,
To be transformed, in her angry moode.
Shee could not doe her glory, greater good.
But what *Alecons* seeke, to serue their vvill,
Shee little knowes, that never knew such ill.

The constancie of Sassauna.

The feely fish, that hooke hath never angled,
Doth seldome feare, whats hidden in the baite,
The bird that never was, with snare entangled,
Doth shun no place, for that thee feares deceite,
So carelesse shee, what cures lie at receite.

To take, entangle, wronge, her guiltlesse minde;
Doth nothing feare, shee should such treason finde.

But *Sathan* (that had smothered, long his fire)
Brings now three blazes flaming, hies apase,
To kindle bright, the brand of their desire,
With beauties praie, commodious time, and place,
Vp (saith he) beastes: faint sluggards: are you bafe?

Cheere vp your sp'rits, let groaning thoughts be glad,
So faire a day, no Lordings ever had,

VVhile faultlesse shee, sits trapt by false occasion,
VVhen once her maides were gone, and all things fast;
Forthwith these lust-breath'd Lordes, made rash invasion,
To make prophane, the soule that is so chaste,
Like hunger-starved, vultures they make halt,
To get the baite, within their ravenous beakes,
To kisse those corall lips, and roseall cheekes.

And though with hast, they fall vpon the ground;
They rise againe, and headlong foorth doe ronne.
The fall doth say, this fact shall you confound.
Your seate is dipt in blood, and you vndone,
O leaue it of, that is so ill begonne.

But while rebellious *Sathan*, runneth by them,
Good motions cannot enter, or come nigh them.

When

The constancie of Susanna.

VWhen shee (good lady) saw these stragling Lordes,
To presse in presence, with such heedelesse speede;
Shee wondred greatly: Ignorant vvhath wordes,
(VWhen as they came) would from their hearts proceede,
They streight vvith circled armes, her bondage breede.
VWhile gazing eies, beholde her comely hue,
And maffling mouthes, these gracelesse speeches spue.

Quoth one of them (for one did speake for boath)
Wee must, with that false heart began to faile him.
To tell the rest his guilty minde was loath,
Thinking (perhaps) dumbe shewes would most auaile him,
And shee amaz'd, with mervelle what should aile him,
To greete her (helleplesse captiue) with *I must*,
Did feare the fury, of the tyrant lust.

And quivering standes, as doth the harmelesse deere,
Beset with greedie cures, and eagre houndes:
Shee lookes about, and pries to finde a cleere,
To scape these *Crocodiles*, that passe their bounds,
VWhose clasped armes, doe yeeld her deadly wounds.
While shame doth tie their tongues, & make the mure,
And conscience seekes, their conquest to confute.

At warre was vvith and will, for best endeavours,
Contending thoughtes, did hold a civill schisme,
As freezing fittes, preceede hoate burning fevors,
So conscience feeles, a shaking *paroxisme*,
In vaine doth reason, fight with *Rhetorisme*.
The weakling wit, constrained is to yeeld,
And bedlem lust, left owner of the field.

An introduction to the story.

For when hee had a tyme, him selfe bethought,
Right, shame, and feare, exiled from his heart,
And love with lust, a cruell combate fought,
And strived one, the other to conuerte.

Then hee began, his passions to impart.

Yet bent to speake, and doughtfull of her nay,

Hee faintes againe and knowes not what to say.

Then (as those cheating mates in conny-catchinge,
Cogge, prate, and lie, to furnish forth their feate)

He beates and settes, his braines a brood in hatching,

Straung sleighes, to gaine this more then golden cheate,

And *Eupheme*, to coole flesh-burning heat.

At length twixt faltring hope, and faint despaire,

He fawnes, he frownes, he threatens, he speaks her faire.

Sweete ladie now (saith he) we must enioy thee.

If no or liues, will soone vn bodied be.

Consent therefore, if no, vve will destroy thee.

And say we saw one heere, embracing thee.

Nay wee will vow by heaven, wee did thee see,

To act adulterouse sinne, with some base slave.

Then yeeld if thou wilt lief and honor have.

If thou demanda, how our sin-seaf'ned hearts,

VVith out remorse can harbor this misdeed,

Then know that love, and dutie playd their partes

VVithin our brests, some better thoughts to breed.

But lust did blot, what reason still decreed.

Thy looke (fair ladie) worthie to be loved,

So bownd our hearts, they might not be removed

Thy

The constancie of Susanna.

Thy stature like, the statly Cedar trees
Thy peerlesse beautie, passing al the rest.
Thy seemely iestures, which each noate and sees,
These are the thinges, enthrall the mightiest.
And make commaunding monarches, to be prest,
To fall from honor, iustice, law, and right.
And bannish those, which love them, out of sight.

These are the traytors, which betray thee now.
These (like false guides) do lead vs from the Lord,
These thinges make lawfull kinges, and Lordes allow,
Thinges most vnlawfull, and to bee abhord.
What man (faire ladie) could not well afford,
To try fell paines, to purchaze such a loue?
Yea paines of death, and thousand perils prove,

Didst ever read, those high conceyted storyes,
In which the lives, of worthy loves are writ?
If so, thou seest, the trophies of their glories,
Weare rayisd on loue and how inspir'd with it,
They pawne their lives, by farthest reach of wit,
To make loves name, eternall and admired.
That else to fame, had not with cost bin hired.

O then but thinke, thy Lords are more tormented,
Who dare susceptr, more perilles then them all.
And yet we know, our deedes may be repented.
Sith greater men, do take the greatest fall.
For when they slip, the *Eccho* is not smal,
That doth reflect their faultes, to every eare,
VVhich makes contented mindes, not climb for feare.
Had

The confavie of Susanna.

Had not (the *Charmer*) beantie vs bee witched,
VVe should have held, the freedom of our state,
And have bin richly, with Gods giftes enriched.
And never feard the spite, of daring fate.
But why do we, our fortunes now relate,
V Which may (perhapes) our rash attemptes ensue?
VVe came not now, our future state to rue.

But came our over burning hearts, to cole,
Enflamed by reflection, of thine eies,
Let them (sweet love) be quenched in that poole,
That may thy *Ioachim* vse, and ours suffice.
But say the word, and we will meanes devise,
That thou fair dame, shalt never be suspected.
For why, our deed, to none shall be detected,

What if thy parentes be, right deere vnto thee?
Thy children deere, good *Ioachim* deerst of all?
Yet flie faint feare, this fact shall not vndo thee,
Beat down distrust, and all his thoughts appall.
For this misdeed, shall not in question call,
Thy spotlesse fame, which all men hold vnfracted,
And deeds *unknowne*, are ev'n as thoughts vnacted.

Qnoth he we both, are linially descended,
From *Iuda* race kinsmen to *Zedachias*.
Thou maist sweet fair, in vs be princely frended,
Yea more, if thou wilt bend vnto our byas,
Thou maist be mother, to the great *Messias*
And so be famosed, by royall birth,
Of absolute commaunder, of the earth.

Thus

The constancie of Susanna.

Thus fleshly speakes, this carnall Cabalist,
Pawninge his soules deere life, to ransom lust.
Or like a kingdome dreaming, *The balmudist*,
That in an earthy empyre, puts his trust.
For *Judas* scepter, then lay in the dust.

And then as now, they hop'd an earthly kinge,
But to his tale, this Sophist more doth singe.

If treasure want, thou shalt haue gold at will,
Or what thy wish, or pleasinge thought desireth.
If honors hight thie honor lasteth still.
While secreasie, our age and state requireth.
Yea place and time, thie free consent now hireth;
Thie maides away, do winke at thine offence,
The cloased dores, will with thie fact, dispence,

If doupres obiecte, our wordes in iest are spoken,
And that our lone is conninge deeply feigned.
Then heere by hollyest vow, (for never broken)
VVe deeply do protest (and vnconstrained)
Our suite is loue, by true affection trayned.

Then yeeld, if no, this armes, consent shall drawe.
For needs wee must, and need obeyes no lawe,

Else if thou dost persist, in flat deniall,
Bee hold extreames at hand, thie doome is teemed.
Adulterie, shall breed thie death in tryall.
So shalt thou dead, an' hipocrite bee deemed.
So shall thine end, bee infamous esteemed.
So shalt thou staine thicken, and blud debase.
Defame thie phere, and bastardize thy race.

The constancie of Susanna.

For we vvell knowne (graue fathers in the land)
VVil in thy trial, iudge and vvitnesse be.
By oath of two, each verdict giv'n must stand.
Our selues vvill sweare, we found embracing thee,
A beardlesse groome, in foule adulterie.
Then better twere, to liue and haue good name,
Then haue thy death, sepulchred in defame.

As for our selues, we haue at large debated,
VVhat shame, what infamie, this fact may gaine.
How that we may be pointed at, and hated,
Yea more then pointed; dailie die like *Cain*,
While drowping life, is buried in disdain.
A loathsome graue, a death far worse then death,
Because the scandal, shal reuiue on earth.

Thus haue we thought, what may ensue the deede,
VVho feares what *may be*, missest: Ladies loue,
Faint hearted carpet knightes, doe seldome speede,
If feare of what *may be*, doth them reprove,
No feare shall daunt my heart, or *may bee* moue.
So strongly hath desire, enchaunted me,
That I must needes, embrace mine infamie.

Sweete let vs then, feede on thy coral lippes,
If that wil not suffice, lets further feede.
For raging lust, hath gotten bedlem whippes;
And beates our heartes, so that the wounds doe bleed,
And nought can cure them, and contentment breede,
But thine embracings, and thy bodies vse,
Which can recure the hurt, procure thy truce,

The constancie of Susanna.

Be briefe therefore, report to vs thy minde,
If thou wilt yeeld, weele rest thy secret friendes,
If no; thou knowst what friendship thou shalt finde.
Thou knowst who so against the streame contends,
Doth strue in vaine; his health but sickely mends.
Contrast thy tale, doe not at large debate,
For know; delaies are dangerous to thy state.

Shee drown'd in gulfes of griefe, to heare him charme,
Like Hobbies pray, lies quivering in their handes.
And panting so, as if shee felt the harme,
That would ensue, if shee their will vvithstandes,
For well shee sees, their shippe stickes fast in sandes.
They care not how they beare, their wind-blown sailes,
And lesse shee knowes, what countaile best auails.

If that shee yeeld, shee is betraide to shame,
If no, shee leaues her friends, her ioies, her life.
VVhich of these two, deserues the greater blame?
To die with shame, or llyue a wicked wife,
Shee schooles her wavering thoughtes, about this strife.
Shall *Susan* doe, what most shee doth detest?
Shall Cuckowes hatch their birdes, in *Ioachims* nest?

Nay rather *Susan*, die an innocent,
And render vp, a pure life-breathing spirit.
Then make thy quiet conscience, male-content:
And purchase death, and hell, for thy demerite,
For harlots shall, no heavenly seates inherite.
And sure I am; if guiltlesse heere I die,
My *Habels* blud, for vengeance hence will crie,

The constancie of Susanna:

VWhy then I will resigne, fond lust to these,
And fall into the handes, of God my king.
Sith far tis better, God then man to please,
For if I yeeld vnto this cursed thing,
My conscience hath, a penetrable sting.

VWhich will torment, my soule far worse then hell,
That I shall bide, more paines then tongue can tell.

The fast would aie, be written in my brow,
The blushing humor, would bewray my case.
If I should heere one say, *Adulteresse thou,*
The redde would rise, and muster, in my face,
As if the wordes, were ment to my disgrace.

My husbandes loving eie, in blotted booke,
VWould read my fault, imprinted in my looke,

In sleepe condemning dreames, would haunt my head,
And shamefast thoughtes, record my shamelesse follie.
The coverings, would crie out, of *Ioachims* bed,
And say faire hypocrite, thou art vnholie,
Pull downe thy plumes, and never more be iollie.

My smiling babies, would bewray their mother,
And yeeld their fires, resemblance, to some other.

Accusing conscience, ioinde with sad remorse,
VWould whip me, with remembrance of mine act.
My guiltie minde, suspition would enforce,
To thinke each whispring tongue, did tell my fact,
And smiling lookes, deride my creadit craft.

And that each nibled lippe, did lend a mocke,
And glauncing eie, behold a gazing stocke.

The constancie of Susanna.

Thus did shee, in her secret thoughtes debate,
VVhat best to doe; before sh'would answere make.
Meane time they long, her to contaminate.
Yet wondred at her lookes, before shee spake,
VVhich Angel-like might moue them to forsake,
Their lewd intent, if ever milde remorse,
| Or tender mercie, might their hard heartes force.

With hands displaid, shee lookes, vnto the skies;
And downe from thence, vpon th'aggrieved ground.
Which might moue stones to teares, if they had eies,
Her to behold, which did vvith griefe abound, (sound.
Whose heart lodg'd cares, while-tongue the se words doth
And eies gush teares, true tokens of deepe sorrow,
Thus hearts from eies fell obiectes, passions borrow.

O you (quoth shee) that sway Gods *Israel*,
Repell prowde *Sathan*, vvho doth seeke your soule.
Flie, flie, for this my heart doth hate as hell,
O flie with speede, least God your sinnes controule,
Rest thus resolv'd, you never gaine this goale.
For never shalt be said, there lies that wife,
Which left her God, to liue a brothels life.

Some birdes and brutish beastes, by natures lore,
Doe flie this fact, as most abhominable.
Then are you worse then they? vvho should haue flore,
Of reason, and in iudgement be most stable,
What doe you thinke, Gods booke is but a bable?
O be not beastes, though you be made of clay,
But haue regard, vnto your soules decay.

VVhat

The constancie of Susanna.

What if I (wicked) should your willes content?
What gaine you if you gaine, your whole request?
VVhy nothing worth a straw, a rush, a bent,
A small thing got, will gaine your great vnrust,
For once obtainde, youle vvish to be releast.
Yea loath the deede, your selues, and me (perhappes)
Therefore my Lordes, be rul'd flie afterclappes.

One droppe of poyson, put into the cupp,
Infectes the whole, and makes it venemous.
So one bad thought, in heart once harbord vp,
Doth cause the body, to be vitious,
Then flie such thoughts, as are so poyssenous.
And let not nature, haue the vpper hand,
But seeke by grace, her ticementes to withstand.

Ist not fowle shame, for him to misse the but?
Which shutes with levi'd aime, to hit the pricke?
Then tis more shame, when states in practise pur,
To winne renowne, and yet like slaues doe stick e,
At honestie, O doe but note this tricke.
First know your selues, then what you vndertake,
So you like conquerours, shall such sinnes forsake.

Do not debase your blood, by base designe,
Your place should foster worthies free from blame.
What though your branch, hath roote in *Iuda* line?
You should depend, vpon deserved fame,
And not leaue all to noblenesse of name.
For nature proues, a tainture in the blood,
Where life laments, that nature is not good.

An introduction to the story.

Phie, Phie, graue Rabbies, grow to be so rash,
To royst like ruffians, and exceede in sin.
Shall leasning salt, become vnfav'ry trash?
VVhat? leese your selues that others seeke to win?
Shall faire without, be cloake to cloake to fowle within?
No, no; sith great ones, are example givers,
Seeme not to be, but be indeede, good liuers.

Let vertue be the ground worke, of your greatnesse,
Set God your guide, in conscience bower of brasse,
For glories fort, not founded is in neatenesse,
A' coursers name, doth naught be-seeme an asse,
Tis folly, phrensie, furie (out alas.)
To stand a tiptoe, on the title point,
If life be loose, and vertue out of ioint.

You aske if I haue conned, histories?
Then know I haue, both humaine and diuine,
Wherein I finde, the lasting infamies,
Of such as shrowded, vnder sinnes blacke shrine,
And how these glorious men, like starres doe shine,
In glories spheere; which haue such faultes forsaken,
And vnto vertues guide, themselues betaken.

VVhat was the cause of raging *catacyisme*,
That did with gastly waues the sinfull smallow?
But beastly life, and brutish barbarisme?
VVhile *Sodome* did, chaste natures hestles vnhallo,
Who, (wantons nice) in lustes delight did wallow,
God purged the polluted place, with fire,
Mader rebell lust, a subiect of his ire.

When

The constancie of Susanna.

VWhen *Sichem* (*Hevite*) did perforce deflower,
Faire *Diana* (*Iacobs* dearling and delight)
Did not sin-hating heaven, at it lowre?
And raise revendge, for this abhord despight?
Yes twas the cause, that *Iacobs* sonnes did fight.
Gain't *Hemors* sonnes, his subiectes and his towne,
All which by them, hand-smooth were beaten downe.

What bloody warre, fierce wrath, and raging spoile,
Fell on the fatall tribe of *Beniamine*?
VWhat time the men of *Gibe*a, did defile,
(By beastlie rape) the *Levites* concubine,
VWhich made their bretherne tribes, so sore repine;
That of the *Beniamites*, there lost their liues,
Fieue times, fieue thousand men, besides their wiues.

VWith *Sittim* plague, fell thowfandes twentie fower,
Because they gaue their liues, to luxurie.
Did *David* scape, for that he did deflower,
Vriahs wife? no sure the childe did die,
That thus was gotten, in adultery.
Yea God did sweare; the like disgrace and sword,
Should light on his, for leaving of his word,

VWhat did prowd *Paris* gaine, to gad to *Greece*,
To fet that mynion, *Menelaus* vvife?
(Fames *Phoenix*; beauties saint, a peerelesse peece)
Shee cost a kingdome large, and many a life,
Sardanapalus, living voide of strife.
Became lustes wanton; wallowed in her pleasure;
VWhich life did leese, his empire life and treasure.

The constancie of Susanna.

And well; for if the Lord in wedlocks cause,
I plague common-weales, and play the vanquisher,
When one fowle fornicator breakes his lawes,
What shall be done, to that adulterer,
The stickler of this strife, and bloody stirre?
Were he not worthy, (breeder of this brawle)
By endlesse death, to pine and die for all?

Your selues of late, (in practise of the law)
Gave doome of stoning death, for like offence.
And can desire, your heartes from right withdraw,
That lawlesse now, you can with laws dispence?
What brainicke humor doth your braines incence?
To deeme that fact, death worthy in an other,
Which you your selues, do foster, feed, and cover?

If speeches doe, but breath and labour leese;
If former wordes, cannot forwarne your eares;
Then yet behold, I offer on my knees,
A sacrifice of sighes, and stormie teares,
Pitty the paine, that in my looke appeares.
Let these my wringed hands, awake remorse,
Vie favour (good my Lords) abuse not force.

Consider what you are: not base borne slaves,
But chiefe conductors, of Gods chosen sheepe.
Then as a crazed ship, that's tost with waues,
Doth let the waters, at the chинckes in creepe,
And drown'th her selfe, withall in whelming deepe.
So you the ship, wherein your subiectes saile,
Your subiectes sinke, when you beginne to faile.

There-

The constancie of Susanna,

Therefore I coniure you, by greate *sehove*,
For countries cause, for subiectes happinesse,
Eor your deere soules estate, no further moue
Mee poore afflicted soule heere succorlesse.
O do not seeke to drowne me, in distresse.

Least now you see, old *Sodom* flames descendinge.
Suppress your suite, serve God who waits amending.

But what avayles, to sounnd to beastes retreyt?
Or quench the blaze, that burneth in the straw?
Though Croco diles do weepe, they meane deceit.
Though Lyons crouch, they hide a hurtful paw.
So though these Lordes, be moane the teeres they saw:
Commende her zeale, extoll her good entent,
Yet still vntamed lust, growes insolent.

The softest drops, do peirce the hardest stoanes,
Through gentle wordes, vngentle heartes will yeeld.
The tenderest *zutho*, softneth toughest boanes.
Milde musick can, mad beastes allure and weild.
Then are your stubborne heades, so strongly steeld?
Or are your heartes so heard, so rough, so ferce,
That nought can enter, soften, season, peirce?

Behold the melting teeres, this ladie sheds.
Behold what greet, lies harbord in her heart.
Behold what modestie, her over-spreads.
Behold how soare, the wound vnmade doth smart.
Behold her soule, repining at this parte.
Behold hart-renting sobbes, assault your eies,
Behold vp heaved handes, for mercie cries.

But

The constancie of Susanna.

But as the wilfull *Aspis*, stoppes her eare;
VVhen charmers chaunting wordes, (like baits entile)
So these enchaunted adders, will not heere,
The wordes of health, or wisedomes sound advise,
So bended will, is bent to winne the price.
That neither may, this ladies plaint or moane,
Make pittie pierce, their heartes more hard then stone.

For when her hearts, deepe oracles were ended;
And that they saw such resolution in her.
VVhile chasteft faire, faire chastitie defended,
Gainst those who sought, with fawning wordes to win her,
As farre from hope, as though they had not seene her.
Perswaded now, faint means would marre their matter,
Her with strong hands, (weak fort) they seeke to batter,

For savage *Satyre*-like, they vould vncover,
VVhat bashfull nature, biddeth secreat hide.
And close as hungrie Ravens, they doe hover,
To doe that great disgrace, shee may not bide,
But when shee saw, foule lust was at full tide.
And that her lingring girles, did stay so long,
Shee cride amaine, before shee felt the wrong.

Helpe, helpe (shee saith) helpe, helpe I am vndone,
O helpe a wofull wretch, in wretched case.
At which her crie, the iunior iudge doth ronne,
And open fettes, the garden dore (apase)
As if some fellon fled, out of the place.
And shee for helpe, doth not so often crie,
But they as fast, stop, keepe, the thiefe doth flie.

The constancie of Susanna.

The seruantes netled, with this suddaine noyes,
Of help, help, help, stop, keepe, the theif doth flie.
Ronne to the posterne gate, (maydes men and boyes)
To find the author, of this mutinie.

(The cursed cause, of that lamenting crye)

VVho staring, gazing gaping ronne aboute,
Like men amaze, to find their mistresse out.

At length they do desire, their ladie faire.

Her beautie blemished, with blubbring teeres.

(As *Phoebe* mantled, with the mystic aie,

VVith watrish beames, vnto the sight appeeres)

Officious dutie, bids her bannish feares.

Relate her hap and let her heart be stronge.

VVhere hands and hearts, are vowd to right her wrong.

But shet good ladie, that did deeme her grooms,

Vnequall vmpires, of her high disgrace,

Leaves her bad hap, vnto their better doomes,

And by herselfe aloane, with-drawes the place.

And beares her greif, imprented in her face.

That *Ioachims* eie might see, and seeing rew,

Her wronged faith, in her deformed hewe.

VVho when he saw his love, and his liues breath,

To quake in ev'ry parte, (as *palsie* shaken)

And cheeke, and lip, to looke as pale as death.

VVhome fresh (life feeding) humour had forsaken.

Himselfe by fainting feare, is overtaken.

But when he sees, her sinkinge to the ground,

With girdling armes, he doth embrace her roynd,

And

The constancie of Susanna.

And sobbing wordes, through his tongue stopping teeres,
He saith, O sweete, sweete heart vnfolde thy grieve.
O speake my loue, and bannish bashfull feeres.
Heere is a hand, shall yeeld thee lardge reliefe.
VVhose hearts true tenure holdes of thee in *chiefe*,
If all the world, should vow t' ware wrong'd by thee,
Yet should it not appeare, a wrong to me.

At vvhich his quickning wordes (as *Phœbus* shine
With powerfull beames, and heat vegetatiue,
Vnshrowdes the earth, from her congealed shrine,
And makes the wythering shrubbe, and grasse revieue,
So) shee begins to spring, and seeme aliuie.
And vvith her faltring tongue (yet all a mort)
Of traitrous men, doth render true report.

And as we blame misfortunes, in their bringers,
Shee blames her maides, as fautors of her wrong,
Shee feesles impatient fittes, and they her fingers,
That durst neglect their due returne so long,
Whose sad excuse, (permixt with teares amonge.)
To seeke the thinges, her selfe had laide amisse,
Return'd her selfe the blame, that wrong'd her blisse.

Meane time, the vnresolved seruants feare it,
VVhat spitefull ill, their lady did surprize.
And though their itching eares, did long to heare it,
Yet aking heartes, did rather *sympathize*,
Then know from whence, their passions did arise.
At length with bashfull boldnesse, and good grace,
They aske the *seniors*, of their mistrille case.

Whose

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhose irefull eies, when first they did behold,
This giddie rowt, (to presse with speed in place)
Did first condemne their deede, as overbold.
VVhile fainting hope, did much distrust their case.
Their lustfull heartes, did murthring thoughtes embrace,
For bashfull nature, once to boldnesse bent,
Growes shamelesse bold, and boldly impudent.

And as a hoat and eagre dogge in hand,
VVhen he beholdes, his game before his eies.
Doth fawne, and leape, & licke, to loose his band,
But when he sees, him keeper surer ties,
Then seirce against him, hee begines to rise,
So they when fawning, could not win their wil,
Rayse like curst cures, and have a minde to kill.

For to the sad demaundantes, there they say,
Heere fownd we *Susan*, in adulterye,
Whose yongue companion, fled from hence away,
Bee fore we could, what wight he was descric.
Beleeve vs (gentle frendes) we tell no lie.
For these our eies, are witnessles, we saw them.
And here's the place, to which thee did with draw the.

VVhich cursed sight, did so our eies offend,
(And much the more for noble *Ioachim*s sake
Our honorable kinsman and good frend)
That we did do our best, the groome, to take.
That speedie death, (for wrong) a mendes might make.
But he for vs, to nimble at strong hand,
Fled by that dore, which yet doth open stand.

The

The constancie of Susanna.

The dutious servitors with bashfull brow,
Blush now with sylvnt shame, at this her fact.
Who never (till that day) was thought to bow,
Vnto so base a sin, or vile an act.
Wherefore they did suspect, some plot compact,
And in her cause, would shape some sharp replic.
VVell armed in her right to giue the lie.

But when they saw, those elders of the land,
VVere vouchers of the fact, and filthie deed.
They darst not contradict them, or withstand.
And yet their inward partes, were touch'd with meed,
To thinke how ill (poore prisoner) shee should speed,
When as the iudges mouth, (the witnessse breath)
Should verdict giue, that giues the doome of death.

And so sad men, greife laden home they go,
To prie what comfort, in their ladies looke.
And leaue these iudges, plotting of her woe.
VVho straight the way, vnto their howses tooke,
Where they their goodly being, badly brooke.
While eage enuie, restlessse doth invent,
The overthrowe, of this chaste innocent.

O Enviwayward witch, fowle hagge of hel,
Whie dost thou make men pine, at mens prosperitie?
O you fond fooles, that in her den do dwell,
And theare torment your selues, with her seueritie,
VVhole slaue is slander, and her page Temeritie.
Whie wast you, restlessse seruice on a dame,
That restlessse wiltheth, vertues seruantes shame;

The constancie of Susanna.

Pale fretting furie, furious sorceresse,
Bel-dame to madnesse, and yoake mate to woe.
Thy mother pride, a mortal murthereffe,
Thy father *Plutus*, mans immortall foe.
Thy brattes blood shedding hate, that hath no hoe.
Contention, striffe, debate, revendge, and slaunder,
VVhich vex the life, and after death do wander

Thy guttes are gald, cholers boyling fome,
Like *Aeetes* wombe, that belkes sulphurous flames,
Thy cabbin carrin thoughtes, a hell thy home.
Thy habite like, those fierce *Tartarian* dames,
VVhose flesh consum'd, there resteth but the rames.
For while thou know'st not how, to hold a meane.
To eate thy neighbors fatlings, makes thee leane.

Their hartes haue anguish, soules haue bitternesse.
VVhome thou dost learne, to laugh at vertues woe.
Thy path is blind, and pau'd with slippernesse.
They walke to hell, that in thy wayes do goe.
Yet are these elders thine, devoted so,
That liuing now, they liue but to depriue,
The life of her, they loath to see aliue;

The filthie roades, infect the fowntaines cleere.
Where others sucke, the venome that they leaue.
And serpentes spue, their poyson everie wheare,
VVhich yet them selues, do not of life bereaue.
But these false seniors, do themselues deceaue.
That spet forth enuies, venome on this dame,
Yet kill them selues, by sucking in the same,

The constancie of Susanna.

For on the following day, of this disgrace,
The iudges with the people, make repara,
To keepe thier vsuall courts, in wonted place,
In Ioachims house (a spacious roome and faire)
VVhere feeble hope, vpholdeth faint dispaire.
VVhile their blud-christlie thoughtes, do wholie long,
To do her fame, and body deadly wronge,

And mounted on, the pow'rfull seat of life,
They wil their summ'nors, to ascite and call,
Susan, (*Helchias* daughter, *Ioachims* wife)
To make appearance there before them all.
And answere in an action criminall.
Thusthey pretend with right, roote out euilles,
But whie should right be prophand in such diuelles,

And shee good lady, (loyall to the lawes)
(Armd with assurance, of her innocence.
And guarded with the goodnesse, of her cause.
In conscience brazen fortresse of defence)
Feignes none excuse, or shifting slie pretence.
But doth obey the summons, and proceed.
And leaves to God th'event of her good speede.

And so attended, with a mourning traine,
Shee makes appearance, in the fatall place,
VVhere standers by, cannot from teeres refraine,
To see the gallant prisoners, wofull case.
Her pheere, her frendes, her parentes, children race,
Repleate the ayre with woes, and grownd with teeres,
VVhile heartes eclipse, in clouded eie appeeres.
VVhere

The constancie of Susanna.

And standing in a robe, of finest blacke,
(Deepe sorrowes signe, by causlesse infamie)
There overspreades her shoulders head and backe;
Avail of lawne, (to note integritie)
Which hid her whiter beautie, from the eie.
This shadow they commaund, to be removed.
That they at least might looke on what they loved.

Which when th' officious officers, had done,
Sweete beauties blush, did yeeld her such a grace;
As when a clowd, is taken from the sonne.
VVhen sorrow suckes, the reds forth of her face,
The machlesse white, aloane doth hold the place.
But when the crymson humor, steines the white;
Corall seemes shadowed, in the *Galactite*.

Such is the beautie, that enchauntes their eies.
And charmes their heartes, through it so sore attaynted.
That they both God and goodnesse do despise.
And vvith nought else, but sin are novv acquainted.
O That shee should, with such faire shape be painted,
To make commaunders mindes, to lust obey.
And shee her selfe, exposed for their pray.

For when they had full gordgd, their ravenous eies;
On beauties dainties. (with a short repast)
They two amid' st, the people do aryse,
To giue their witnesse, gainst this constante chaste.
And as the law doth will, their handes they plast,
Vppon the head, of this pure innocent.
(Two woules soule pawes, a seely lamb to rent)

The constancie of Susanna.

VVheare swearing by Gods name, a solemne oath,
To set aside, all partiall loue and hate,
And speake the truth, and nothing but the troth.
Periured iudges (foes to trutthes estate)
Vnto the people, thus they intymate,
This noble dame, that shewd a sant in sight,
Is fownd vnconstant, fickle, lewd, and light,

For yesterday, in *Ioachims* orchard walkinge,
To recreate our sprites, with holesome ayre,
This dame with her two damselles, thither stalkinge,
Thear did to her, an vnknowne youth repayre.
VVhose shape was comly, and his feature fayre.
But er he came in sight, that none detect it,
Her madens thee distrust least they suspect it.

VVhoe being gone, and dores ybarred fast,
VVee (throwded from their sight) with wakefull heed
Perceu'd the wicked, to their sin make hast.
And creaping cloassly, with conuenient speed,
Wee did surprize them, in the shamfull deede.
And him we caught, but yet away he fled.
For him from vs, his strength deliuered,

But her we held, and thear examined,
VVhat youth he was, that did her bodie vse.
And though confessing shame did die her red,
Yet to resolue our dought shee did refuse.
And with still sylence did her selfe accuse.
Thus haue we shewd the fact, of this lewd wife.
For which misdeed, law biddes her lose her life.

The constancie of Susanna.

Shee all this space, with patience on her knee,
VVith handes and eies, vp-reared to the skie,
Commends her cause to God, which all doth see.
VVhile groaning spirite, in anguish plundgd doth crye,
Help, help, me God, or else in shame I die.

Thou rul'st right, then stretch thine arme so strong,
And overrule the rulers of this wronge.

While thus shee doth appeale vnto the highest,
Her burning zeale doth plead her innocence,
Her modest looke, doth say, false iudge thou liest.
Her bathfull tylence, speakes in her defence
Her good reporte, reproves their ill pretence
The streames of teares, that on her cheekes ar spilt,
By secreat verdict, quittes her from the guilt,

Yet much amaz'd, to here this diuell speake,
(For well shee wist no manlike mind he bore)
Shee shapen him answere, else her heart would breake.
Although her tormentes, should be much the more,
Shee saw pale death attending at the dore.

To take her thence, if that shee held her peace,
And if shee speake, shee could not death increase,

VVherefore ev'n as a man, thats sencelesse stroken,
VVhen as he comes, vnto himselfe againe,
And feeles his bodie, wonnded, bruf'd, or broken,
By swarting cause, cannot from wrath refraine,
But letteeh flie, his irefull blowes amaine.

Ev'n so her conscience, netled by dispiight.

Fights with fierce words, weake champions of her right.

The constancie of Susanna.

O admyrable patience (sayth shee)
And depth interachable of Gods intent,
Whether this happe for tryall vnto me,
Or for these helhownds, greater punnishment,
Hee onely knowes, which onely hath it sent.
VVhie doth he not, with righteous hand repress,
This scum of sin and filth of filthinesse?

VVhie did not wombe, before these babes did sprawle,
Abhorre such seede, vnworthie for the brests.
VVhie entred life, within such bitter gaule?
VVhie harbour soules, within such filthie nestes?
Whie did the ayre, giue breathing to such beastes?
Whie did the heav'nes, permit so fowle an eie,
For to behould, the pure vnspotted skie?

Whie did not nature, mould deformed clay,
So fowle mishapen mindes, for to ingerth?
Whie swell not floudes, and swiftly sweepe a way,
This seede of *Cain*, from the polluted earth?
Whie did not hell, deuoure them in the birth?
VVhie do not angrie elementes, conspire,
To powre vppon them, hoat consuming fire?

Whie did the earth, eate *Corach* and his crewe,
And suffer these to trample on her browe?
VVhie did wilde beares, those idoll ympes subdue,
And do wilde beastes, these beastes to liue allowe?
Whie do not thunderboltes, enforce them bowe?
What should I say? whie doth not God in ruth,
Commaund each power, to punnish their vntruth?

The constancie of Susanna.

But thou O Lord, art free from this offence,
VVhen rav'ning woulves such seely lambes devour,
Thou righteous, dost not punish innocence.
Tis not thy worke, tis they abuse thy power,
Thy power is iust, the imperfection our.
The aire is good, that doth the voice dispence,
Though faultly vnde, to giue false evidence.

Then iudges (most vniust) behold the skies,
Thinke thear's a God, those glorious globes that guide:
Let not despaire, your soules deere health dispise,
But haue regard, what law you goe besides,
Perpend in deepest thought God not abides,
Such wrathfull *Cams*, as vvaist the guiltlesse blood,
Then haue respect to me, for your owne good.

Perchance you thinke, your sinnes so farre exceede,
That God is never able, to forgiue.
O flie those thoughtes, which swift destruction breede,
And that our God, is mercifull belieue.
Doe not so willingly, to darke hell diue.
But these your haynous deedes, from heart repent,
And God will then, remit sinnes punishment.

Let not fowle sin, be seeded in your age,
Let not your vertues die, before they spring.
Doe not commit on me, so great outrage,
But let true iustice rule, in ev'rie thing,
Consider what defame, such wrong will bring.
VVhat doe you thinke, God sees not what you doe?
Yes sure he doth, then haue respect thereto.

The constancie of Susanna.

Your conscience can controule, your heartes of follie,
Your hearts can say, your tongues doe falshood tell,
Your tongues can tell, your action is vnholie,
To wrong a feely woman, meaning vuell,
And hating this offence, as hatefull hell.

Let pittie raise remorse, and bannish wronge,
Be not to stout, because you are to strong.

But if your heartes blood-hardned still remaine,
To shed her blood, that hath no lawes offended.
Then worke your wils on me, (O sonnes of *am*)
VVould God in this good cause, my life were ended,
So that your liues, and manners were amended.

VVhich if you doe not right, with speedy pace,
Mine honors wrong, your honors will deface.

A tree but young, one may both bow and bend;
VVhen as the old, will hardly bend at all.
A whelp with trickes, is taught to fetch and send,
VVhen as old dogges, to it you hardly hall,
VVho can reclaime, wilde haggards to the call?
Even so these men that seaf'ned are in sin,
To serue the Lord cannot tell how begin,

For when they heard, this oratresses tale,
VVith constant speech, and gesture so declaimed.
Fierce envies fretting poyson, made them pale,
Fearing to misse the marke, whereat they aimed,
They doe inferre it falshood, meerely feigned.

To frustrate iustice, with a lye perswasion,
And from deserved death, to make evasion,

The constancie of Susanna.

No credit giue (say they) this cunning dame,
Which with lip-savish wordes, would shift her death,
A man huge myriades of vnttruthes, would frame.
If he by them, could buy life, feeding breath.
Is not a iudges word, that witnesseth?

Is not our oath confirmed vvith our hand?

VVhat two doe vvitnessle, law doth will to stand.

VVhich said, they do proceede to doome of death,
(By processe had from the imperiall state)
And one the dolefull sentence, vttereth;
Shee should be led, foorth of the citie gate,
And there (as *Moses* doth the law relate)
The multitude (a fickle wavering head)
Should presse her downe, with stones til she were dead.

Thus doth the law, by witnessle wrested deale,
Thus is the vertuous dame condemn'd to die,
The iudge reiectes, the husbandes graue appeale,
He stops his eares, at parentes sad reply.
He will not heere, the infantes wofull cry.

(No doubt a pafe that godly land doth flourish,
VVhich doth such lust-affected iudges nourish.)

But loath to be interred in shames nest,
Stab'd with heart-wounding wordes, falles on her knee,
Shee wakes her thoughtes, with thumping on her brest,
Flies to her last refuge, to set her free.
Entreates her God, with humble teeres that hee.

VVould not for sake, or leaue her in distresse,
But send his comfort, to her comfortlesse.

The constancie of Susanna.

O righteous God, my iudge (saith shee)
V Which see'st the secret heart,
And dost inflict, revenge on those,
That doe thy lawes subvert.

Represse the pride of tyrants stout,
V Which doe my life assaile.
Heere now and helpe, thy handmaide helpe,
For helpe of man doth faile.

Do not expose me for their pray,
Because they doe not right,
But hunt in heart to bring about,
That's hatefull in thy sight,

And of a meere malicious minde,
False witness heere haue brought,
And causlesse laid vnto my charge,
The things I never thought.

Thou see'st (my God) vvhath they haue done,
Thou see'st their envious heart.
Thou know'st they fought to lawlesse lust,
Thine hand-maide to convert,

Thou know'st, I dread not dying death,
Ne force his might a pin.
No, no, I doe desire to die,
A better life to win.

An introduction to the story.

Itender not faire beauties trash,
Itender my good name,
Least leeing life, I be by death,
Entombed in defame.

For this cause rise (O Lord) make hast,
Repell my soules despight.
And shew the nations, farre and neere,
How much thou tendrest right.

I know my sinnes are passing great,
VVhich acted are each hower.
Yet let my teeres thy mercy treat,
And shield me with thy power.

If no (defamed wretch) I die,
For keeping of thy law,
And causlesse thou shalt seeme (my God)
Thy comfort to withdraw.

Hast then O Lord, make hast I say,
Least guiltlesse blood be spilt.
Yet not my will be done in this,
But be it as thou vvilt.

VVhen shee her godly, oraysons had ended,
And that no meanes was left, to make delay.
The fawning officers, in court attended,
VVith prophane handes, to hale her thence away,
And though shee were as readie to obey,
Yet still this soare, doth smart in guiltlesse minde,
That shee should leaue, an ill report behinde.

When

The constancie of Susanna.

VWhen once the streetes, did act this tragædie,
Vaultes, and resounding *Ecchoes* from the stones,
Reporte the mothers teeres, her childrens crie,
Her parentes plaintes, her husbandes hideous moanes,
Her kinfolkes sighes, her friendes heart-breaking grones,
The peoples pleading tongues, to God to free her,
VWhile thicke tumultuous troopes, doe run to see her,

VWho passing foorth, with passing seemely port,
(Her looke abated, with her languishment.)
Shee doth the gazing lookers on, exhort.
Good people pray for me, poore innocent,
Thats guiltlesse, faultlesse, free, from al intent,
Of this misdeede, for which weake wretch I die,
VWhome still with deepest hate, I did desie.

VWhile thus with plaintes, they doe Gods aide implore,
The Lord did heere, and helpe her wofull case.
For as when tyrant *Pharaoh*, scepter bore,
(A *Pharaoh* fierce, that knew not *Iosephes* face)
And did the *Israelites*, oppresse long space.
They being tyred, with his tirannie,
In deepest grieve, vnto Gods favor flie.

VWho when their moanes, did mount vnto his sight,
D d single foorth, their speedy preservation.
From *Pharaohs* traine, a courtly trained wight,
Moses (an *Hebrew* borne) by education,
His daughters sonne (which bred his estimation)
So now; God seeing, *Susans* great distresse,
Ev'n in the nicke did speede her due redresse.

The constancie of Susanna.

For in the *Chaldean* court, did then attend,
A noble *Iew* (a youngling for his yeares)
The monarches mynion; and his chiefeſt friend;
One of his ſage and ſharpeſt fighted *Seeres*,
In which high feate, he paſt his graue compeeres,
While *Iſrels* God, did reare his fortunes hie,
To beare a ſtroake, in *Aſſas* maieſtie.

He *Daniel* cleaped, by his native name,
(The *Chaldeeſ* cald him, noble *Balthazar*)
VVhom neither courtly glee, nor phraſe of fame,
Could in faire *Sions* zeale, ought make or marre,
But would (to keepe the captiue *Iewes* from iar)
In private ſort, at times repaire and prie,
Into his bretherneſtate, with wakefull eie,

And ſtanding now, in this tumultuous thronge,
Hee ſaw blinde zeale, imployd in good pretence.
VVhat time Gods truth, enform'd him of the wrong,
And raiſd his ſp'rite to ſpeake in her defence,
Bad him be bold, to plead her innocence.
Step forth in place, doe not thy thoughtes conceale,
Cry out amaine, from diuellish doome appeale.

Then *Daniell* (as the Lord commaunded him)
Cride in the ſtreetes; *I from this blood am cleane*,
VVhile gazing heerers, looked ſowre and grim,
To muſe what theſe, vnlook'd for wordes ſhould meane.
Fowle toades (ſaith he) infect the chriſtall ſtreame.
Because you would the ſtreame farre purer finde,
You kill the fiſh, but leaue the toades behinde.

The constancie of Susanna.

Are you such lots, O seede of *Israell*?
Are you so blind, you see not what you do?
Are you so deafe you heare not what they tel?
Know you not right, and what bee longes thearto.
Survey you not, your steppes before you goe?
Whie haue yov heere, condemnd this dame to dies
And would not heere her iust appeale and crie?

O turne with speed, turne to the iudgment seate.
And then behould, what God will thear relate.
Your sevior sinnes, haue growne exceeding' greate.
Repelled lust, ingendring with foule hate,
In them the bastard periurie, begate.
Bold periurie did breed false witnesse bearing.
False witnesse wrested iudgmente, by for-swearng.

At which his wordes, the people yonge and olde
Do make a stand and backwardes thence retire.
Whear daunting sins, the seniours heartes make cold.
While daunger woundes, the depth of their desire.
Yet past shams bowndes, their shamlesse thoughts aspire
And soorth they passe, into the sessions hall,
And hide in crabbed brow, their conscience gaule.

The elders of this circumfized race,
(Which with reprimed pris'nour turne a ge'n)
When ev'rie one, had ta'ne his vsuall place,
They say vnto this stately stripling then,
Use thou the roome, of these malitious men.
Declare to vs, Gods iudgmente and decree.
Sith God hath giv'n, an elders spirite to thee.

Then

The constancie of Susanna.

Then Daniell tooke, the powerfull place of life,
And thear to intimate, Gods will to all;
Where are (quoth he) the wrongers of this wise?
Put them a parte, out of each others call,
And bring forth one (by one) in to the hall.
So you shall see, their traytrouse tongues reveale,
What wicked heartes, do cover and conceale.

The formall officers, performe his mind.
And brought forth one, to be examined,
Who lookd like murthrous marked Cain, vnkind,
When brothers blood, he guiltlessely had shed.
His colour shew'd, what harbord in his head.
His ioyntes (as if vnioynted) were at iarre.
Falle iudge (now prif'ner) pleading at the barre.

And standing thus, before the balefull bench,
The bearded iudge (to checke him vncontrold
That conscience as a cooling carde might quench,
The heate of his bravado overbold)
Saith, thou sin seased wretch, that waxest olde
In sin thy wicked life is come to light.
Whose falshood harmed, manie a harmlesse wight.

Thou hast abus'd thy life, God lent to thee,
To mend thy life, and passed sins repent.
For nothing but oppressions, he could see.
Therefore he will, thie glorie from thee rent.
Which hast condemn'd, to death an innocent,
And let the guiltie, goe for giftes a way.
V While lust and bribes, did blind thee day by day,

Sith

The constancie of Susanna.

Sith sworne thou hast, (eie witnesse) thou didst see,
This comely dame, with her companion sin:
Report the truth; and name to vs the tree,
That hid the fact, you did surpriſe them in.
Pause not but ſpeake, (if wordes ſhall creadit win)
Be brieſe, let not oblivion beare the blot,
Things done ſo late, are not ſo ſoone forgot.

Then pawſing twixt deſpaire, and tyred hope,
(As one that had no conſtant yea, nor nay)
VVould faine intreate, ſome longer time and ſcope,
But that he findes impatience in delay,
VVhile to himſelfe he ſaies; ſhall I obey?
Confeſſe my fault wherein I haue offended,
And pardon craue that all may be amended?

No, no my heart ſhall never ſtoope ſo low,
To bow to thoſe, that vſe to bend to me.
I am not ſure, what favour ſuch will ſhew,
Wherefore I wil deviſe, ſome kinde of tree,
VVhoſe branching bowghes, might ſhrowd adulterie.
Thus reaſons he (a bird of *Balam's* brood)
That will not be reclaim'd, to any good.

At laſt he gapes for breath yet doubtſ to ſpeake,
(Be cauſe his partners doubtſ he doth not know)
Yet through his teeth, this tragique tale doth breake,
(VVhile foaming furie makes him puffe and blow)
Saith he in *Ioachims* orchard, there doth grow,
A *Maſtike* tree, whoſe branches clowd the ſonne,
In whoſe darke ſhade, the brothels act was done.

VVhen

The constancie of Susanna.

VWhen *Daniell* heard, this vncomposed speech,
False are (quoth he) the wordes thou dost report.
Thy lying lippes, thee partiall doe appeach,
Gods minde to me reavealed; doth exhort,
Thy sinfull bodie, from thy soule to sort.
As one (deserving endlesse death to die)
That darst, gainst God, and conscience sweare a lie.

VWhen this was acted, him they lead away,
And bring his brother foorth, in open place,
In whose fell heart (fowle cabbin) envie lay,
Her wilde and staring looke, sate in his face,
(A wrinkled browv, a pale, and megre grace.
Did murther, mischiefe, mallice fierce, resemble)
While cōscience cold, doth cause him quake & trēble.

To whom younge *Daniell* saith in zealous mood;
O seed of cursed *Cham*, ympe of dispight.
In vaine thy vaunt, doth boast of *Iuda* blood,
VWhen as thou art, in life a *Cananite*,
True nobles should, in noble actes delight.
But thou bewitch'd vvith beautie, weart beguiled,
When thy misleading lust, thine heart defiled,

Thus haue you past, your passed liues ill-spent,
Since first your wanton heartes, did traine you in,
To draw the dames of *Israell*, to your bent.
Whom you with feare did force, and flattery win,
To ioine with you, in acting secreat sinne.
But this chaste *Iewish* heere, of *Iuda* race,
Resisted hath, your follic to your face.

Now

The constancie of Susanna.

Now sith thy tongue, hath testifide an act.
VVhich fame did not reposite but eie did vewe
And thou death worthie, deemed hast the fact.
Dissemble not be still a witnesse true.
Tell vs what tree, and in what place it grew,
VVhose shamesse shad, did shrowd this shamfull sin.
Pause ere thou speake, yet speake, and soone begin.

Hee grayield now in greife, and grim dispaire
(Like bowged barge, that sinkes in swallowing sandes)
Gapes ere he speaks, as if he wanted ayre.
VVhich oft with cloased lippes, he countermaundes.
At length (saith he) in *Ioachims* orchard standes,
Neere fowntain faire, a greene thck braunching *Holly*,
Vnder whose shad, these wicked wrought their folly.

Quoth *Daniell* then, your tongues haue yon betrayd.
Your forged lie, shall light vppon your pates.
Your wicked heartes, your wordes haue heere bewrayd.
The sword of *Iustice* (that iniustice hates)
Is readie heere, to slay you (sinfull mates)
Provide therefore a treble death to die,
Of bodie, soule, and lasting infamie.

For as you boath, haue causlesse sought to spill,
The guiltlesse blood, of this chaste *Israele*,
By witnesse false, therfore doth *Moses* will,
Your blood be shed; and we will doe you right,
Sith that your tongues, death-worthy you indite.
You shall be led, where shee should leese her breath,
And there with stones, your selues be done to death.

Which

The constancie of Susanna.

Which doome did much delight, the standers by,
VVith greate applause, the people do reioyce.
They clap their handes, and fling their cappes on hie,
The rooſe reflectes, the *Eccho* of their voyce.
VVhile thankfull heartes, their eies to heav'n vphoice,
And tongues pronounce, *Our God be prayſed ever,*
VVhich helpeth his and doth for ſake them neuer.

Theſe iudges thus diſgraded, from their ſtates.
The multitude with readineſſe, doth ronne,
To doe that doome, on theſe condemned mates,
They to acquitted *Suſan*, would haue donne.
VVhile zeale would act, what wrong had ill beegonne.
Thus careleſſe commons, right or wrong ſupport,
When they are ſwayd, as ſovereignes do exhort.

For as in man, when vapours vex the braines,
The giddie head, doth feele a whirling fit.
So ſicke heads, to feed ſuperiours vaines,
(When as affection, holdes the ſeate of wit)
Sway to and fro, as ruling vapours flit.
If they ſay yea, an yea doth anſwere ſtand,
If they ſay no, a no is preſſ at hand.

And yet (ſometimes though ſotted with content
That everie act doth ſeeme, to breed their eaſe)
Some whiles (when wayward vapors gets a vent)
A toy (the leaſt occaſion doth diſpleaſe)
VVhile thoughtes do eb, and flow like ſurginge ſea.
For who ſo deales, with multitudes he findes,
In manie heades, a multitude of mindes.

The constancie of Susanna:

While heartes do harbour, heapes of homely toyes,
And heades are fraught, with Chaos of conceites,
There comes continuall trade, of chaunging ioyes.
Which barter novelties, for elder feates,
As chaunging time, doth offer choice of cheates.
So those which yesterday, wrought wrong with might,
Are busied now, in acting of the right.

For now with hast they haue them from the barre,
Whome late before, they heaved to the bench.
No treatie could, a day their death deferre.
While teeres the peoples furie, could not quench,
Which drue them forth, vnto the fatal trench.
And (pinion'd) bound them to the stubborne stake,
Where they their wel-deserved death should take.

Who living now forlorne (past liues repaire)
Haue not the heart, Gods mercie to intreate,
But rather seeke with Saul in deepe dispaire,
VVith bluddie murthering hands, life to defeat.
VVhile gainst the stake their handes they bawle and beat.
And mind in vaine, their dreame their fall their height.
VVho wanted grace, to take Gods warning tight.

The pitying people pray, God turne their hartes,
But when they see, repentance place had none,
To yeeld those reprobates, their due desertes,
The happiest man, doth hurle the heaviest stone.
To make them giue, the last life-yeelding grone.
VVhich done they part and leave the ded, their room;
And laud the lord, and Damn! for his doome.
VVhose

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhome God had made, selected instrument,
To overthrow these wicked and vniust.
And saue the blood, of this chaste innocēt.
That with stoute *Constancie* resisted lust,
And did not in distresse, defrawd her trust.

But saw her teeres, and heard her plainting voyce,
VVhich made the hearts of thousandes to reioyce.

Amongst the rest (whose heartes sweet comfort cheeres)
Helchia happie man, and his compeere,
(which erst did weepe for woe) shed ioyfull teeres.
VVhen *Ioachims* ioy, had past this plunging feere,
And kinsfolkes clouded eie, shone bright and cleere.
All with sweete noates consent, in *Susans* name,
Praise God, that had preserv'd her from defame.

But cheifly shee (like larke on mounting winges)
VVhile inward zeale, breakes out in open sight,
Tryumphing in her tunes, most sweetely sings,
The prayse of God, his mercie, and his might,
That did relive her wretch and wronged wight.
And iustly iudge her foes, the death to die.
That would entombe her fame, in infamie

Yea while her silent heart, doth thanks record,
Her restlessse notes, do reach beyond the skie.
VVhose endlessse ioy, was in her grations Lord.
To him in hymnes, and tuned psalmodie.
(VVhich did transmute, her moanes to melodie)
shee giues the glorie of her victories,
As *Dauid* when he foyld his enemies.

The constancie of Susanna.

The mighty Lord (saith shee)
Is my defence and might.
My king, my guide, my God;
My champion, for to fight.

The combate of my truth and conscience triall.

He is my Anchor-hold,
My refuge, rest, and port.
My horne of saving health,
and eke my strongest fort.

Gainst whose comand, there standeth no denial.

VWhen over-flowing floodes,
Of raging fierce despight.
And great commaund, of Lordes
And men of power and might,

With dreadful threats of death, did make me quie-
I did implore his aide, (ver.
In deepenesse of distresse.

VWho heard my rust complainr,
And wrought my due redresse.

He sent me aide, and did my soule deliver,

On him therefore I will,
In danger crie and call.

VWho can both heere and helpe,
(He heeres and helpeth all)

He (none but he) is worthie to be praised.

Deathes swallowing sorrowes hem'd,
Me round on ev'rie side.

VWith renting paines of hel,
In dangerto haue did.

But he my life, from ravening graue hath raised,

The constancie of Sufanna.

He from my strongest foes,
Hath set me captiue free.
Because he had a loue,
And fauour vnto me.
Who cunningly they sought to haue prevented,
But while he held me vp,
I could not swaie nor swarue.
They sought in vaine to spill,
The thing he did preserue.
And so to late (their labour lost) repented.

By him I made escape,
From handes of Tyrantes stout,
His power did put them downe,
And helpe his hand-maide out.
That power also, will strongly keep them vnder.
He trampleth with his feete,
Bold traitours that rebell.
He makes their hurtfull tongues,
Their owne destruction tell.
Thus for his saintes, he acteth workes of wonder.

VVhose workes are all diuine,
VVhose mercies manifold.
His waies past finding out,
his word as finest gold.
His iudgement iust, his providence vnspotted.
O let thine arme O Lord,
My feeble hand susteine.
O let thy holy sp^rite,
VVithin my heart remaine,
O let thy loue be still to me allotted.

The constancie of Susanna.

I looke with wakefull eyes,
Vnto thine holy lawes.
Thy statutes are my staffe,
And stay in ev'ry cause.
To doe thy will, my will I finde affected.
That which I see is ill,
And hatefull in thy sight,
That doe I seeke to shun,
And flie with maine and might,
Least that my soule, by sin should be infected,

Thou art a living God,
Oblest be thou my king.
VWhich hast thy servant freed,
From tempting *Sathans* sting.
And reard my fame on high (by wicked wróged)
And hast confounded them,
That sought my greatest ill,
By working of my heart,
Vnto a wicked will.
To act such lewd signes, as lust had longed.

They fought to end my life,
And gaue me doome to die.
Because my holy faith,
I would not falsifie. (listd.
Pretending right, they worke what wrong them
They vsed power to pur,
Integritie to shame.
And ment an innocent,
To burie in defame. (sted.
Hadst thou not (Lord) their iudgement false resi,

Thus

The constancie of Susanna.

Thus hast thou bin (my God)
Most mercifull to me.
Not wonne by my desert,
But of thy mercie free.
My workes (I know) deserue to be reiected,
But thy kinde promise made,
To helpe the godlie heartes,
Doth binde thee more then all,
Our deedes or good desertes,
To keepe, protect, and saue, thy saintes elected.

Therefore I will sowne forth,
Thy praise to eu' rie eare.
And shew thine endlesse power,
To nations farre and neere,
To *Sathans* and his kingdomes, great confusion,
I haue bin, am, and will
Remaine thine handmaide still.
Mine heart, my thoughtes, mine eies,
Shall waite vpon thy will,
This is my vow, and fetled resolution.

Thus did shee spend, her following time of life,
In heavens contemplation, and delight.
And lived long, a iouious happie wife,
Of passing cariage, and a worthie wight,
A foe to frawd, and fastest friend to right.
VWho living in the world, no worldling was,
But prest to bring a world of good to passe.

The constancie of Susanna

And as a bird, escaped from the ginne;
Thinks ev'ry bended twigge, to be a trappe;
So shee, that dangerously, had snared bin,
(VVith true remembrance of her former hap)
Surveies her steppes, to shunne each afterclap.
And feares to giue a fawning eie good grace,
In old, or young, in noble, or in base.

At length when age, had plotted lifes decay;
And sicknesse wrought, in weakenesse more and more.
And that shee thought, death had no long delay.
Shee cald her children, taught in godlie lore,
And did bestow these precepts kept in store.
VVho come in place (with dutious loving hearts)
Shee thus to them, her carefull minde impartes,

Deare children cease, with sad lamenting griefe,
And malancholicke moanes, to waile my state.
Your sobbing hearts doe yeeld me no reliefe,
But vexing torments in my heart innate.
Leaue then, for plaintes and teares are not in date.
No, no, if they could life in body hold;
VVeaye would weepe, we would buy teares for gold.

But vaine it is to kicke against a pricke;
And sinne to take Gods scourge impatiently.
My debt to death, to pay I must not sticke,
For why, you know that all are borne to die,
Then must I yeeld, for ther's no remedie;
And pay my due that I to nature owe,
For time requires, and God will haue it so.

The constancie of Susanna.

The strongest Lyon, stoopes to conqu'ring death,
The aged oake, at length doth change his hue.
In time the long liv'd *Phoenix*, leeseeth breath,
Thrice aged *Enoch*, yeeldes to natures due.
Sith then tis so, and what I saie is true.
And time doth trie that all things must decaie,
Then sure I know, I haue not long to staie.

Therefore marke well, the counsaile that I giue,
Revolue it in your mindes (my children deere)
For it shall most preuaile (if that you liue)
VVhen friends and worldly goods you haue not heere,
First worship God, and to his lawes giue care.
Set him your load-starre, and your lampe of light,
His lawes the line to lead your liues aright,

Vse diligence, in doing of your dueties,
To those superiours (rulers over you)
Doe good to all, bend thereto all your studies,
Sing not the *Syrens* song, that proues vntrue,
Though trothlesse *Absalon*, be faire in view,
VVith *Jonathan*, doe faithfull still remaine,
Shun *Ismaels* bloudie teares, and subrill braine.

Plaie not the cowards in your countries good,
Spend in her canse, your deereft breath and wealth,
And though prosperitie hath you withstood,
And frowning world denies gal-sugred pelfe,
Be not dismaide, esteeme your heav'nlie health.
For that shall yeeld you comfort in distresse,
VVhen world and friends, haue left you comfortlesse.

Flie

The constancie of Susanna.

Flie still aspiring mindes, yet seeke renowne,
VVin it by vertue, and by manly might,
Franke not rebellious flesh, but keepe it downe.
Like not those painted dames that doe delight,
Lyllies are fowle in smell, though faire in sight. (moanes,
And though they tice with baites, with teeres, with
Yet minde, that painted tombes, haue rotten bones.

My sonnes if you must liue, in wedlocke bandes,
Loue for vertue, and like the modest chaste.
Set neither fading beaury, goods nor landes,
Before that hue, that in the heart is plaste.
Be never prodigall, your goods to wast..
Learne with the busie ant, the way to liue,
Spare not to much, but doe by sparing thriue.

If you vvith childrens store, be blest of God,
His richest giftes account that pretie crew.
Enstruck and bring them vp, to feare the rod,
VVith those precepts your parents taught to you,
Though all things want, let them not want this due.
For sure (my sonnes) it is not laide for naught,
Better vnborne, then borne to liue vntaught.

Esteeme the wavering world as it is,
VVhere swiftest time, brings all things to decay.
Esteeme your selues, heere voide of ioies and blisse,
And thinke each morrow, is your ending day,
Desire of God on earth not long to stay. }
VVhere nought but sin, & grieve doth reigne (be bold)
And nought is got, but sinne in waxing old.

The constancie of Susanna.

The little babe once colming to the birth,
Is borne as bare, and naked as my naile.
The puling wretch his wofull state on earth,
VVith tongue, and teeres, new born doth weep and waille.
To see his soule shut vp, in sinful gaile,
And swaddled lims, fast fettered round aboute.
Like captiue wreth, that no way findeth out,

His childish actions all; vnperfect are,
To sit, to eate, to speake, to stand, to goe,
The childe is raught and nursed vp with care,
And pampred eke with paine, and wakefull woe,
He proues the pikes, of manie a pangue also.
VVith furious foes, he hath continuall warre,
His flesh this world and raging fiend they are.

His life is like, the raging seas recoile,
His choyest things, are in event but vaine,
His wealth is want, his rest is restless toile,
His health mishap, and all his pleasures paine,
His chiefe companions linked in one chaine.
Are hopelesse hope, deepe danger, care and feare,
VWhile dying life, doth dailie dread the beare.

He often times (beset with deepe distresse)
Doth call for death, before his dying daie.
And dead man like, by sleeping in excesse,
Doth spend the halfe, of precious time away,
The rest mispent in idlenesse or play.
Or spent to serve our owne occasions so,
As least we care, whear God haue part or noe

The constancie of Susanna.

Thus man is made, the pray and spoyle of time,
A ripe of miserie and mishap (God woat)
A sinke of sinfull-sin, an heap of crime,
A ship that still on billowing waues doth flore
When age comes on, then all his senses doat.
He waxeth deafe, his eies with dazing dimme,
His teeth currupt, he hath no lively limme,

Can such a dying man, be sayd to liue?
What kind of life? what living call you this?
No life but death, a shade that life doth giue.
For perfect life, by death obtained is.
Whie then do mortall worldlinges go amisse?
Whie love they life whie do they death detest?
Which sets them free from ill, and bringeth rest;

Hence learne (poore heartes) your life vncerteine is,
Still heaps of harmes, are hovering on your head.
Keepe these my wordes, and feare to do amisse.
More would I say, but life is partly fled.
Whome death (with seely triumph) doth downe tred;
Fare well (sweete ioyes) sometimes my heartes delight
The grownd my corpes, to God I yeeld my spirite

Epi.



Epilogus.

Thus heere you see, how God preserveth his
And those that do them iniurize, confowndeth,
Hence may you learne, what t'is to live amisse,
What falles to him, that with prowd sin abowndeth.
That hee which stedfast hope, in Gods helpe grownderh
Gainst him not hell, nor hel houndes shall preveile,
For God will help, when help of man doth faile,

FINIS.

Faultes escaped.

*In foll. 4. Page 1. make consens malcomons, 5. 1. surely surely, 15, 1. maiden bird, maiden
carib, 15, 2. married wife, married wife, 18, 1. un, murne, 23, 1. faice faire, 31, 2. thus this, 30, 2.
thes thefe; thus the. 37, 1. repense replease, 40, 2. this thefe, 42, 2. swallow swallow, 46, 1.
the they.*



• ၁၉၄၆ ခုနှစ်

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